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African Bird Club

THE NATURAL
HISTORY MUSEUM
3 SEP 2001
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Bulletin of the African Bird Club
Vol 8 No 2 September 2001

Long-billed Tailorbird

Uluguru Bush Shrike

Pelagic seabirds off Morocco

Lake Chad Project

Ornithological notes from Eritrea

Gambia observations

Tracking White Storks

Avian range limits in Côte d'Ivoire

Citrine Wagtail on Senegal

Leach's Storm-Petrel in South Africa

ISSN 1352-481X

African Bird Club

The African Bird Club aims to:

- provide a worldwide focus for African ornithology
- encourage an interest in the conservation of the birds of the region
- liaise with and promote the work of existing regional societies
- publish a twice-yearly colour bulletin
- encourage observers to visit lesser known areas of the region
- encourage observers to actively search for globally threatened and near-threatened species
- run the ABC Conservation Programme

Registered Charity No 1053920

ABC Web site
http://www.africanbirdclub.org

ABC Council

Phil Atkinson (Chairman), Keith Betton, Richard Butler, Mark Catterall, Stan Davies, Roy Hargreaves, Moira Hargreaves, Gordon Holtshausen, Paul Lascelles, Rob Lucking, Bill Quantrill (Secretary), Alan Williams (Treasurer) and John Wyatt. ***President:*** Martin Woodcock

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Membership of the ABC

Membership of the ABC is open to all and costs, per annum, UK£15 *Individual (Africa & Europe)*, UK£17 *Individual (Rest of the World)*, UK£18 *Family (Africa & Europe)*, UK£20 *Family (Rest of the World)*, UK£8 *Student (Africa & Europe)*, UK£10 *Student (Rest of the World)*, UK£25 *Libraries/Institutions*, UK£25 minimum *Supporting Member*, or UK£300 *Life Member*. To join or for further details please write to the membership secretary at the club address below.

Contact ABC

African Bird Club, c/o BirdLife International, Wellbrook Court, Girton Road, Cambridge CB3 0NA.
email: info@africanbirdclub.org

Further information can be obtained directly from individual council members. Please use the following email addresses or contact them via the club's postal address. With email, replace @... with *@africanbirdclub.org*, e.g. *chairman@africanbirdclub.org* will reach the Chairman

Chairman	Phil Atkinson	chairman@africanbirdclub.org
Secretary & Membership	Bill Quantrill	secretary@...
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Bulletin editor	Guy Kirwan	editor@...
ABC Conservation Programme	Rob Lucking	conservation@...
Sales	Moira Hargreaves	sales@...
Country Representatives	Paul Lascelles	reps@...
Meetings	Richard Butler	meetings@...

The Bulletin of the African Bird Club

The *Bulletin of the ABC* provides a forum for news, letters, notices, recent publications, expedition results, reviews and publication of studies on African birds by contributors from throughout the world. Publication of interim results in the *Bulletin of the ABC* does not preclude publication of final results as journal papers either by the ABC or elsewhere. No material should, however, be submitted simultaneously to the *Bulletin of the ABC* and to any other publication.

Brief notes for contributors appear elsewhere in this bulletin and further details are available from the editor (editor@africanbirdclub.org).

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Contents

Bull ABC Vol 8 No 2

THE NATURAL
HISTORY MUSEUM
3 SEP 2001
PURCHASED
TRING LIBRARY

News & Comment

74 **Club News**
Compiled by Paul Lascelles

76 **Advertising rates**

77 **Minutes of Seventh AGM**

78 **Obituary**
Dr Phillip Alexander Clancey

79 **ABC Conservation Programme**

80 **Africa Round-up**
Compiled by Ron Demey and Guy Kirwan

87 **Requests for Information**

88 **ABC Conservation Fund Update**

88 **Errata**

134 **Short Notes**
Leach's Storm-Petrel breeding in South Africa
P.A. Whittington, B.M.Dyer and L.G. Underhill
Black-backed Cisticola: a new species for Tanzania
Thomas Gottschalk
The status of Isabelline Wheatear in Morocco
Valéry Schollaert and Gilles Willem
First record of Cassin's Hawk-Eagle for Kenya
William S. Clark and Carl Edelstam
Bergeronnette citrine à Dakar: première mention pour le Sénégal
Christophe Gruwier, Stéphane Claerbout et Bruno Portier

142 **Reviews**

145 **Recent Reports**
Compiled by Ron Demey

Features

89 **Forest loss in the Ulugurus, Tanzania and the status of Uluguru Bush Shrike *Malaconotus alius***
Neil Burgess, Tom S. Romdal and Marcel Rahner

91 **Is the endangered Long-billed (Moreau's) Tailorbird *Orthotomus* [*Artisornis*] *moreaui* safe in the East Usambaras?**
Norbert J. Cordeiro, Veli M. Pohjonen and Elia Mulungu

95 **Ornithological notes from a primate survey in Eritrea**
Dietmar Zinner

107 **Pelagic seabird report and status review of selected species occurring off the Atlantic coast of Morocco**
R.J.G. Dawson, C.G.R. Bowden and H.M. Cameron

113 **Selected observations from The Gambia, 1997–1999, with comments on the identification of a number of species**
M. D. Crewe

117 **Have birds shifted their range limits southwards in Côte d'Ivoire, West Africa?**
Volker Salewski, Hugo Rainey and Franz Bairlein

121 **The Lake Chad Bird Migration Project: Malamfatori revisited**
Ulf Ottosson, Christian Hjort and Philip Hall

127 **On the track of the African storks**
P.A. Whittington and L.G. Underhill

129 **Treasure beneath the waves**
P.A. Whittington

Front cover plate
Uluguru Bush Shrike *Malaconotus alius* by *Mark Andrews*

Illustrations
Mark Andrews, Nik Borrow, John Cox, Martin Elliot, Mike Hodgson/ Birdquest, Ian Lewington, Craig Robson, Colin Towe

Photographs
William S. Clark, Norbert J. Cordeiro, Thomas Gottschalk, Tommy Holmgren, Bruno Portier, Ulf Uttosson, Gilles Willem

Club News

African Membership Development

One of the key objectives for the Club over the next five years, agreed at the Club planning workshop last year, is to make ABC more truly 'African'. Eight years after it was founded the Club has established a membership base of over 1,250 enthusiasts of African ornithology, scattered in more than 60 countries on five continents. But barely a quarter of those members actually reside in Africa.

We have a number of schemes to encourage greater African involvement in the Club. The Supporting Members scheme has been in existence since the Club was founded. Under this scheme, members agree to pay an increased subscription with the additional money being used to support the membership of Africans not in a position to pay their own subscriptions. So far sixty-one individuals have benefited from this programme. More recently, we have launched the Affiliated Membership scheme to create links between ABC and bird clubs in Africa, and have also been running trial schemes to permit members to pay their subscriptions in their local currencies, thus surmounting one of the biggest obstacles to membership for many people—the difficulty of obtaining foreign exchange.

We are now starting to build on our experience by initiating co-ordinated programmes in a number of countries across the continent. In each of the selected countries we aim to establish a partnership with a suitable local NGO, who receive copies of the Bulletin for circulation among their members and administer a local payments scheme on behalf of ABC. There is a sliding scale of membership fees, ranging from free membership for candidates who qualify as Supported Members, through various reduced rates for students and other young people to full membership—but all payable in local currency. The money thus raised remains within the country concerned and is used firstly to cover the expenses of the local ABC partner NGO and then to finance suitable local bird conservation projects.

This year we have re-launched schemes on these lines in collaboration with BirdLife South Africa and BirdLife Zimbabwe, and have initiated a scheme in Uganda in collaboration with Nature Uganda. A similar proposal for Kenya is under discussion, and the Club is also hoping to build on links we have already established with like-minded organisations in Cameroon, Madagascar and Ghana. The Club would be pleased to hear from any other individual members or Africa-based organisations that would like to work with ABC in the pursuit of these objectives.

Finally, in this context, we should note the links that have been established between ABC and the coordinating committee established at the 10th Pan-African Ornithological Congress (PAOC) in Uganda last year. It became clear at PAOC that ABC and PAOC share many objectives in common and that there was much to be gained by our working together.

Update of the list of African country bird recorders and records committees

In its first Bulletin, ABC published a list of the individuals or organisations responsible for collating bird records for each African country. At the PAOC, one criticism we heard levelled at the Club was that some records published in the Bulletin had not been submitted to local contacts, and there was an increasing danger that records would not reach the relevant organisation in country. We encourage every visitor to send in records to the country recorders and with the increasing use of electronic communication in Africa, this should be a quick and efficient process.

To help remedy this we will be publishing an updated list of contacts in the next Bulletin. Keith Betton has been collating this list, and the current list can be seen at the club's website www.africanbirdclub.org. There are however several countries for which updated information is needed. Anyone who knows of the relevant local contact can contact Keith at info@africanbirdclub.org. The countries/areas for which we are seeking contacts are: Algeria, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cameroon, Eritrea, Gabon, Guinea Bissau, Lesotho, Malawi, Mauritius, Nigeria, Réunion and Rodrigues.

African Birding

Although only six months old, the e-mail list had 430 members at 1 August 2001. It has developed into a useful forum for contacting people and disseminating information of pan-African interest. It is free to join. Simply go to www.africanbirdclub.org and follow the link to join.

Improving the Club's website

The information service offered by the Club continues to be well used and is providing a useful service to many people. To extend this, the Club is planning on expanding its website to include a section of frequently asked questions about each country in Africa. For example, the following are obvious inclusions: the national bird recorder and rarities committees, names and addresses of bird or conservation NGOs and their publications. The Club will also aim to include information on general birding in the country, best field guides to use and useful trip reports etc. We are looking for people with expertise in each country to help write accounts for the website and also suggestions for other information that could be included. All help will be fully acknowledged. If you would be interested or for further information and a sample account please contact Phil Atkinson at chairman@africanbirdclub.org.

ABC forthcoming meetings

On Saturday 8 September 2001, ABC will hold a joint meeting with the Norfolk Bird Club in Blakeney Village Hall. Doors open at 19.30 hrs.

The 2002 London Meeting and AGM will be held on Saturday 9 March 2002. Details of speakers, the AGM programme and confirmation of venue will be posted to members in early 2002. In order to save on the considerable postal costs involved, Council proposes to send the AGM programme only to UK-based members. The minutes of the AGM are published in the following Bulletin. Overseas members who wish to receive the AGM agenda should notify the Club Secretary via secretary@africanbirdclub.org.

ABC sales items

The following items are currently available from ABC Sales.

1. ABC Sweatshirt featuring an embroidered ABC logo and 'African Bird Club Working for Birds in Africa'; black, navy or bottle-green. Sizes: medium, large, extra-large and extra-extra large: UK£20.
2. Old-style ABC Polo shirt featuring an embroidered ABC logo and 'African Bird Club. Working for Birds in Africa', forest-green. Sizes: small and medium only: UK£6.50.
3. New-style ABC Polo shirt featuring an embroidered ABC logo and 'African Bird Club. Working for Birds in Africa', bottle-green, navy-blue and black. Sizes: large, extra-large and extra-extra-large only: UK£13.50.
4. New ABC T-shirt featuring Bush Shrikes by Dave Nurney, grey. Sizes: large, extra-large and extra-extra-large only: UK£13.50.
5. ABC T-shirt featuring African Rollers by Mark Andrews, white. Sizes: large and extra large: UK£9.
6. ABC T-shirt featuring Turacos, white. Sizes: extra large only: UK£9.
7. ABC caps featuring an embroidered ABC logo, black, bottle green, red, maroon and navy: UK£7.
8. ABC enamel badge featuring a Slender-billed Curlew design: UK£1.
9. ABC car and telescope stickers: UK£1.
10. ABC bone-china mugs: 2 designs featuring Carmine Bee-eater or Golden-breasted Starlings by Martin Woodcock: UK£7 or UK£12 a pair.
11. Pen, printed with 'African Bird Club' and ABC logo: UK£0.25
12. Pencil, printed with 'African Bird Club' and ABC logo: UK£0.15.
13. White-winged Apalis A4 colour print by Nik Borrow from *Bull. ABC* 2 (2): signed and numbered limited edition of 50 at UK£10; also available unsigned at UK£3.50.
14. Nightjar A4 colour prints by Martin Woodcock from *Bull. ABC* 2 (2): one print illustrates Mountain and Rwenzori Nightjars, the second depicts Black-shouldered and Fiery-necked Nightjars: UK£3.50 each.
15. Locally designed cards on hand-made paper, produced by the paper making co-operative of the BirdLife International-supported Kilum Mountain Forest Project in Cameroon. A selection of five cards in a hand-woven wallet: UK£5.
16. Self-adhesive 're-use envelope' labels featuring ABC logo. UK£1 for 10
17. *Bull. ABC*, volume 1, 1994, number 1 and 2: UK£5 each.
18. *Bull. ABC*, volume 2, 1995, number 1 and 2: UK£6 each.
19. *Bull. ABC*, volume 3, 1996, number 1 and 2: UK£6 each.
20. *Bull. ABC*, volume 4, 1997, number 1 and 2: UK£7 each.
21. *Bull. ABC*, volume 5, 1998, number 1 and 2: UK£7 each.
22. *Bull. ABC*, volume 5, 1998, number 1 and 2: UK£7 each.
22. Azores Trip Report, Sep–Oct 1997 by Willem Steenge and Theo Bakker: UK£6.
23. Cameroon Trip Report, Dec 1994–Jan 1995 by Richard Webb: UK£6.
24. Cameroon Trip Report, Mar–April 1997 by Jon Hornbuckle: UK£4.
25. Cape Verde Trip Report, Mar 1996 by Theo Bakker and Klaas van Dijk: UK£6.50.
26. Ethiopia Trip Report, Dec 1995–Jan 1996 by Richard Webb: UK£7.50.
27. Ethiopia Trip Report, Oct–Nov 1996 by Jon Hornbuckle: UK£4.
28. Ethiopia: In search of endemic birds, Sep–Oct 1997 by Julian Francis and Hadoram Shirihai: UK£10.
29. Ethiopia/Eritrea Trip Report, Mar–May 1998 by David Murdoch: UK£3.
30. The Gambia, 10–17 Sep 1999 by Stuart Sharp: UK£5.00.
31. Birding Ghana, Feb 1996 by Mindy and Sherif El Din: UK£6.50.
32. Ghana Trip Report, Jan–Feb 1997 by Simon Plat: UK£4.
33. Côte d'Ivoire by public transport trip report, Jan–Feb 1995 by Eddie Williams: UK£4.
34. Kenya Trip Report, Feb-Mar 1995 by Mike Hunter and Graham Speight: UK£8.
35. Madagascar and the Comoros, Oct–Nov 1995 by Jon Hornbuckle: UK£4.
36. Madagascar, Nov–Dec 1997 by Chris Bell, Mike Hunter, Dawn Ross and Malcolm Roxby: UK£3.
37. Madagascar (with Mauritius and Réunion), winter 1997–98 by Brian Gee: UK£9.
38. Madagascar Trip Report by Paul Noakes: UK£2.50.
39. Malawi, March 1997 by Jon Hornbuckle: UK£3.
40. Malawi and the Luangwa Valley, Zambia, Jul–Aug 1997 by Henk Hendriks: UK£8.
41. Namibia and the Cape, Nov 1994 by Jon Hornbuckle: UK£4.
42. Birding Sénégal, 10–29 November 1998 by Mindy and Sherif Baha el Din: UK£5.
43. Eastern South Africa and Zimbabwe, Feb–Mar 1997 by Jon Hornbuckle: UK£5.
44. Voyage Naturaliste au Cape Provinces d'Afrique du Sud, Sep–Oct 1997 par Georges et Mireille Olioso: UK£6.
45. Usambara Mountains, Tanzania, Jan–Feb 1996 by Eddie Williams: UK£4.50.
46. Uganda Trip Report, Jun–Aug 1995 by Henk Hendriks: UK£6.50.
47. Wakkerstroom Bird and Nature Guide, by Warwick and Michèle Tarboton: UK£4.
48. Birdwatch Zimbabwe, 1991, by Derek Solomon and Jacko Williams: UK£7.

Postage and packing: please send UK£2 for each UK order, and UK£3 for each overseas surface mail order. For overseas airmail please add UK£1.50 for each item ordered.

Orders: payments should be made in pounds sterling by cheque/postal order (payable to African Bird Club) or credit card. Full credit card details are required, please specify: Visa, Access, Mastercard or Eurocard; card number; cardholder's name (as it appears on card); cardholder's address; expiry date; cardholder's signature; and amount payable. Please be sure to specify your name and address and the full details of your order including quantity, with size and colour where applicable.

Please send your order to African Bird Club, c/o BirdLife International, Wellbrook Court, Girton Road, Cambridge CB3 0NA, United Kingdom. Enquiries may also be sent to ABC Sales Officer, Moira Hargreaves, at the Club's address or e-mail: Moira.Y.Hargreaves@btinternet.com.

African Bird Club—summary statement of accounts at 31 December 2000

(A copy of the full statement may be obtained from the Club Treasurer on request)

Income and Expenditure Account—year to 31 December 2000

Main Account

INCOME

	2000	1999
Subscriptions	18,192	16,506
Other revenue	1,304	3,396
Bank and Building Society Interest	416	372
Tax refund	534	
	20,446	20,274
Less:		
Bulletin Costs (including postage)	15,002	14,829
Income before expenses	5,444	5,445
EXPENSES		
General expenses—stationery, telephone, meeting costs etc	4,605	3,966
Participation at PAOC	3,551	
World Birding Conference	704	
Finance costs—bank charges, depreciation, accountancy etc	2,165	1,161
Total expenses	11,025	5,127
Surplus for year	-5,581	318

Conservation Account (see Note below)

	2000	1999
INCOME		
Donations and sponsorship	613	633
Profit on sales of Club merchandise	2,523	2,138
Total income	3,136	2,771
EXPENDITURE		
Conservation awards made in year	3,544	3,322
Balance for year carried forward	-408	-551

Note: £8000 was set aside at the end of 1997 to form the Conservation Fund. Profits on sales of Club merchandise and income from donations and sponsorship are now added to this fund.

Balance Sheet at 31 December 2000

Fixed Assets	
Equipment	877
Current Assets	
Stock of goods for resale	2,753
Bank and Building Society Balances	19,269
	22,022
Less:	
Current Liabilities	
Subscriptions paid in advance	8,503
Life memberships	6,384
Sundry creditors	30
	14,917
Net current assets	7,105
Total assets	7,982
Represented by:	
Accumulated Fund brought forward	6,366
Surplus for year	-5,581
Conservation Fund brought forward	7,605
Conservation Fund balance for year	-408
	7,982

Advertise in the *Bulletin of the ABC*

All advertisements must be sent **prepaid** (cheques made payable to the African Bird Club) as camera-ready copy, bromide/film or on floppy disk to:

Moira Hargreaves, 30 Highfield Road, Tring,
Herts, HP23 4DX, UK.

If adverts are sent on floppy disk we can accept Pagemaker 6, CorelDraw7 files or unformatted ASCII text files and uncompressed TIF graphics files. If adverts are prepared on an Apple Mac the diskette should be formatted for PC.

The current rates are as follows and are based on a print run of 1,500 copies. These rates are guaranteed for the March 2002 *Bull ABC.*

Please address all queries to Moira Hargreaves at the above address.

African Bird Club Advertising Rates

Black & white

Full-page	£95	(210 x 145mm)
Half-page	£60	(100 x 145mm)
Quarter-page	£40	(100 x 70mm)
Eighth-page	£25	(50 x 70mm)

Colour

Please contact Moira Hargreaves on Tel/Fax: 01442 823624. E-mail: moira.y.hargreaves@btinternet.com (or write to the address given above left.)

Copy deadlines

Spring Bulletin	15 January
Autumn Bulletin	05 June

Minutes of the Seventh AGM of the African Bird Club

held on 10 March 2001 at the School of Oriental and African Studies, Thornhaugh Street, London at 14.00 hr

Present

The following registered their attendance at the meeting:

Philip Adlington, Mark Andrews, John Archer, Julius Arinaitwe, Phil Atkinson, David Barker, B H Beck, Keith Betton, Mike Blair, Richard Bosanquet, D R Calder, Anthony Cheke, P C Cherry, Julie Childs, Patrick Claffey, Chris Collins, Simon Davidson, Megan Dickens, Guy Eldridge, Lincoln Fishpool, Simon Fogg, Mr & Mrs Gordon Gale, Wenceslas Gatarabirwa, F M Gauntlett, Brian Gee, Tony Gibbs, Michael Grigson, Moira Hargreaves, Roy Hargreaves, I Hazari, Anthony Hazeldine, Chris Hendley, Mr and Mrs A Holcombe, P Jones, Michael Kings, Peter Lack, Russell Leavett, Stephen Lowe, Shiwua A Manu, Arthur Mason, Christine Mason, Andy Merritt, Lloyd Milliner, John Mujinga, Ms A Nahkola, Eric Pilcher, Madeleine Prangley, Bill Quantrill, Rowena Quantrill, Geoffrey Randall, Keith Seaton, A W Seymour, Brendan Sloan, M P Stanyer, Don Taylor, Mr and Mrs N & J M K Thomas, John Walder, Alan Wilkinson, Alan Williams.

Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from John Armitage, Zul Bhatia, David Brooks, Richard Butler, Tony Clarke, Jon Gibbons, John Hammick, Alan Ivens, Rob and Vicki Lucking, Duncan Macdonald, Amberley Moore, Yvonne Savidge, Richard Webb, Barbara and Martin Woodcock.

Minutes of the last Meeting

The minutes of the last meeting were taken as read and approved unanimously.

Matters arising from the Minutes

There were no matters arising.

Report of the Council for 2000

In introducing the report, copies of which had been distributed at the meeting, the Chairman stated that 2000 had been a successful year for the Club, marked by two major initiatives: a weekend workshop at Minsmere during which past and present members of ABC Council reviewed the Club's activities to date and drew up a five-year plan, and the opportunity for the Club to play a supporting role at the 10th Pan-African Ornithological Congress. The conservation programme had made five awards during the year, as well as providing financial support to help c20 people from Kenya, Madagascar and Senegal to attend the PAOC. An Expedition Award had contributed to the costs of a survey of the birds of Annobón Island in Equatorial Guinea. Four applicants received books under the NHBS/ABC Book Awards. The Chairman paid tribute to two members of Council who were standing down, Gordon Holtshausen and Stan Davies, and also thanked the Club's Corporate Sponsors and the many volunteers who have helped the Club in different ways over the past year.

Presentation of the Accounts for 2000 and Treasurer's Report

In presenting the Accounts, copies of which had been distributed at the meeting, the Treasurer reported that the Club's finances remained healthy. The deficit of UK£5,500 incurred during the year arose from four exceptional items: investment in the PAOC, write-off of old stocks of Club merchandise, extra meeting costs arising from the Minsmere workshop and the Club's contribution to the costs of the planned 2nd World Birding Conference. Once these were discounted, income and expenditure remained in balance and there were no plans to increase subscriptions in the next two years. There being no questions, the Accounts were approved unanimously.

Election of Council

The following were elected to the African Bird Club Council for 2001:

Phil Atkinson, Keith Betton, Richard Butler, Mark Catterall, Patrick Claffey, Moira Hargreaves, Roy Hargreaves, Paul Lascelles, Rob Lucking, Bill Quantrill and Alan Williams.

Election of Executive Officers

The following were elected as Executive Officers of the Club for 2001:

Chairman: Phil Atkinson
Secretary: Bill Quantrill
Treasurer: Alan Williams

Appointment of Auditor

Mr B P G Blackler, FCMA, MIMgt was elected as Auditor for 2001.

Any Other Business

There was a short discussion of whether the AGM should always be held in London. It was suggested that holding the meeting in, say, Birmingham would make it more accessible to members from other parts of the country without necessarily making it any more difficult for many of those who attended the London meeting. On a show of hands, c50% of those present stated they would attend a meeting held in Birmingham. There was support for holding meetings in both locations and at different times of the year. It was agreed that Council should take account of the points made in the discussion in deciding the location of future meetings. There being no other business, the Chairman declared the meeting closed at 14.30 hr.

Obituary

Dr Phillip Alexander Clancey

1917–2001

Dr Phillip Alexander Clancey was born on 26 September 1917 in Glasgow, Scotland. His family subsequently moved to London and then to Switzerland where he started school. By the age of seven he was back in Scotland where he attended several schools in Glasgow before studying at the Glasgow School of Art as a young man. He served with the Allied forces in Sicily and Italy during World War II, escaping death by the narrowest of margins on several occasions and was deafened in one ear for over two months by an artillery explosion. He was de-mobbed in 1946 and employed by an engineering consortium in the north of England for a few years. Ornithology, however, remained his abiding passion and in 1948–1949 he accompanied Richard Meinertzhagen on an ornithological expedition to eastern and southern Africa and the Middle East that included Yemen, Aden, Somali, Kenya and South Africa.

He immigrated to South Africa in August 1950 to assume the post of Curator of the Natal Museum, in Pietermaritzburg. He was appointed Director of the Durban Museum and Art Gallery on 1 January 1952 and held this post until his retirement over 30 years later on 25 September 1982. He remained a Research Associate of the Durban Natural Science Museum until the date of his passing. Two nieces who reside in Scotland survive Dr Clancey.

Clancey was a prodigious scientific author on African birds, especially their taxonomy, with a particular interest in the identification of subspecies. Examples of his many catalogues and books include *Catalogue of the Birds of the South African Subregion* (1965–1972), *Handlist of the Birds of Southern Mozambique* (1970–1972), for which he was awarded the prestigious Gill Memorial Medal of the Southern African Ornithological Society (now BirdLife South Africa), *The Birds of Natal and Zululand* (1964), *The Gamebirds of Southern Africa* (1967), *The Rare Birds of Southern Africa* (1985) and *Kingfishers of Sub-Saharan Africa* (1992). He was the chief editor of the *S.A.O.S. Checklist of Southern African Birds* (1980). Dr Clancey was a co-author of the second volume of the landmark *Atlas of Speciation of African Birds*, published by the British Museum (Natural History) in 1978. He also contributed as an author to *The Atlas of Southern African Birds* (1997). His list of other publications is even more impressive, running to a monumental total of over 530 scientific papers and associated articles. Indeed his legacy of taxonomic papers is unsurpassed and Dr Clancey named some 200 subspecies of southern African birds. Others have named several avian subspecies in his honour.

He served as President of the Southern African Ornithological Society, was the long-standing Chairman of its List Committee, and was awarded Honorary Life Membership by this organisation. The American Ornithologists' Union honoured him by appointing him as a Corresponding Fellow. He was also a long-standing Chairman of the Natal Bird Club (now BirdLife Port Natal) during the Club's formative years and subsequently served as its President. In addition, he served as President of the Southern African Museums Association and was awarded a Fellowship by the Museums Association in London. The University of Natal conferred on him the degree of Doctor of Science *honoris causa* in 1981.

Dr Clancey was almost single-handedly responsible for amassing the collection of some 40,000 bird skins housed in the Durban Natural Science Museum. His skill in the preparation of bird skins was renowned and the Museum's collection, the third largest in Africa, is widely acknowledged as the finest on the continent. Clancey organised some 26 major expeditions in Africa during the course of this collection's compilation. His trips to Mozambique were the most noteworthy and resulted in the largest collection of material in existence from this poorly known region. His discovery of the Lemon-breasted Canary *Serinus citrinipectus*, a species new to science, and of the southern Mozambique population of the Olive-headed Weaver *Ploceus olivaceiceps* were particular highlights of these investigations. His success in placing the museum at the forefront of African ornithology is reflected in the large number of eminent ornithologists that have served there during and since his tenure, including Walter Lawson, Richard Brooke, Clive Quickelberge, Ian Sinclair, Dr John Mendelsohn and Dr Aldo Berruti.

His artist talents are evident in the many bird paintings presented in his books and in the dioramas on display in the Durban Natural Science Museum. Some of the latter were repainted up to six times until they matched his exacting standards. Several million visitors to the Museum have enjoyed these displays since their unveiling. His avian portraits remain in high demand by collectors of fine African art; for example his work has graced the boardrooms of companies such as Barlow Rand.

Dr Clancey was a rare combination of outstanding scientist, author, artist and administrator. His immense contribution speaks for itself and the meticulous dedication characteristic of his life's work serves as an example for others working in the various fields, which this man so ably mastered.

David Allan

African Bird Club

CONSERVATION PROGRAMME

ABC Conservation Fund

The ABC Conservation Fund supports small conservation projects in Africa. To date, Conservation Awards totalling over UK£10,000 (US$15,000) have been made. These awards embraced a wide range of activities in five countries, from environmental education projects to research on endangered species.

ABC Conservation Awards are available to African individuals or institutions, or to individuals normally resident in an African country, and the Club welcomes project proposals for funding up to a maximum of UK£750 (US$1,125). Further information on the Conservation Fund and guidelines on how to write a good project proposal can be found on the ABC website (http://www.africanbirdclub.org), or obtained from the Club address below.

ABC Expedition Award

The ABC Expedition Award is a recent initiative. One award of UK£1,000 (US$1,500) will be made annually. Full details can be found on the ABC website (http://www.africanbirdclub.org) or obtained from the Club's address below.

Further information...

For further information about the African Bird Club Conservation Programme, please write to Rob Lucking at African Bird Club, c/o BirdLife International, Wellbrook Court, Girton Road, Cambridge CB3 0NA, UK, or by e-mail to conservation@africanbirdclub.org

Uluguru Bush Shrike *Malaconotus alius*
by Mark Andrews

Africa Round-up

General

A new subspecies of Red-billed Hornbill

The widespread Red-billed Hornbill *Tockus erythrorhynchus* is usually considered to have five subspecies, that in western Africa being the nominate. However, Bernard Tréca and Christian Erard found that those from the western end of the range, east to Mali's inner Niger delta, have black circumorbital skin, whereas in those east to Chad this skin is pale yellowish. They recognise the black-faced birds as a new subspecies, *T. e. kempi*. The authors state that more research is needed to ascertain the status of this new subspecies: its facial coloration could be associated with other eco-ethological characters and could play an important role in specific mate recognition.

Source: Ostrich 71, *pp 363–366*

Systematics and evolution of akalats

African forest robins (akalats) of the genus *Sheppardia* are represented by eight forest-dwelling species with restricted distributions in tropical Africa. All but three are strictly montane, being found in isolated highland areas of East and West Africa. Their subtle plumage variation and almost wholly allopatric distributions have made determination of their systematic relationships, based upon morphology, difficult. However, through their distribution, the group offers an ideal opportunity to test models of speciation within tropical forests. Michael Roy and his co-workers investigated the phylogeny of the genus using mtDNA sequence analysis, discovering that the monophyly of described species, even from disjunct populations, is well supported. However, relationships among species are generally poorly resolved, with support given only to the pairings of *S. montana*/*S. lowei*, *S. bocagei*/*S. gunningi*, and *S. aequatorialis*/*S. cyornithopsis*. These datasets lent support to *S. montana* and *S. lowei* representing a superspecies. All taxa appear to have evolved rapidly from a common ancestor around the Miocene/Pliocene transition, a time of the last uplift of East Africa's montane region. Surprisingly, intraspecific radiations suggest a far more recent population expansion in the upper Pleistocene, concordant with major climatic variation and vegetational changes.

Source: Molecular Phylogenetics and Evol. *18, pp 74–83*

Effects of geometric constraints on species-richness pattern in African birds

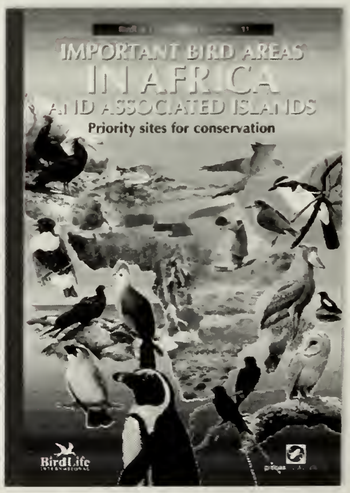
The world contains boundaries (eg continental edge for terrestrial taxa) that impose geometric constraints on the distribution of species ranges. Contrary to traditional thinking, the expected species-richness pattern, in the absence of ecological or physiographical factors, is unlikely to be uniform. Species richness has been demonstrated to peak in the centre of a bounded one-dimensional domain, even in the absence of ecological or physiographical factors. Because species ranges are not linear, an extension of the approach to two dimensions was recently performed, and the results published in the Proceedings of the Academy of Natural Sciences at Philadelphia. The authors of the paper present a two-dimensional null model accounting for effects of geometric constraints, which they then used to examine the effects of continental edge on the distribution of terrestrial animals in Africa and compared the predictions with the observed pattern of species richness in African endemic birds. Latitudinal, longitudinal and two-dimensional patterns of species richness could be accurately predicted from the modelled null effects. As expected, null effects are of high significance only for wide-ranging species. The results of the study highlight the conceptual significance of the until recently neglected constraint of continental shape and support a more cautious analysis of species-richness patterns at this scale.

Source: Proc. Natl. Acad. Sci. USA *98, pp 5661–5666*

Important Bird Areas in Africa publication and launch

This October sees the publication and launch, by BirdLife International, of *Important Bird Areas in Africa and Associated Islands*. The book is an output of a unique pan-African collaborative effort between the BirdLife Partnership and numerous other African conservationists. For the first time, information on Important Bird Areas (IBAs) will be presented from each of the 58 African countries and associated islands with more than 1,200 priority sites for birds in Africa covered in detail. Over the last decade many people have worked together to identify and document a network of sites of global conservation significance across Africa. The ultimate goal of this process is the protection of these sites as a means of conserving the birdlife and other biodiversity of the continent.

Important Bird Areas in Africa is a major output of BirdLife's IBA Programme, which began in 1993 and has seen the publication of national directories to many countries, including Ethiopia, Kenya and Madagascar, and regional directories, such as southern Africa. These volumes are important advocacy tools that are used when engaging with decision- and policy-makers. There are also invaluable for birdwatchers planning trips in the region!



The single-volume book will be launched at a major event hosted by BirdLife South Africa, in Johannesburg, on 22 October this year. Representatives from all 58 territories covered are being invited to attend, as well as several international conservation dignitaries. *Important Bird Areas in Africa* is being published in a joint venture between BirdLife International and Pisces Publications. Copies can be ordered at a special pre-publication price of just UK£39.95 (plus postage and packing) from Pisces Publications, NatureBureau, 36 Kingfisher Court, Hambridge Rd, Newbury RG14 5SJ, UK. Tel: +44 1635 550 380, e-mail: pisces@naturebureau.co.uk. Full payment (by cheque or Visa Mastercard) will be required before the publication date. The expected retail price is UK£60.00.

Source: BirdLife International in litt. *June 2001*

Sixth World Conference on birds of prey and owls

This event is scheduled to be held on 18–25 May 2002, in Budapest, Hungary, and will include a programme of presentations, posters and excursions. Further information will be reported regularly on the www.Raptors-International.de website, via the electronic newsletter *Raptor News* and in the newsletter of the World Working Group on Birds of Prey (WWGBP). Enquiries should be addressed to WWGBP, P.O. Box 52, Towcester NN12 7ZW, UK. tel/fax: +44 (0)1604 862331, or via e-mail to robin.chancellor@virgin.net or WWGBP@aol.com. Suggestions concerning the conference (themes, submission of papers, excursions etc) are cordially invited and should be e-mailed, faxed or sent to the address above.

Source: WWGBP via African Birding e-mail discussion group, May 2001

Greater Spotted Eagle *Aquila clanga* by Mark Andrews

BOC declares new open-door policy

Founded in 1892, as an adjunct to the British Ornithologists' Union (BOU), the British Ornithologists' Club (BOC) has, since 1894, published the well-respected *Bulletin of the British Ornithologists' Club*. Possibly more type descriptions have been published in *Bull. BOC*, as it is better known, than in any other journal, and it continues to set a distinguished pace in the publication of new taxa description and novel distributional information. A recent change in the Club's rules means that full membership is available to all (formerly BOC was open only to BOU members, although it was possible to subscribe to the Bulletin at a higher institutional rate). As of 2001, full membership can be obtained for UK£18, with entitlements including the quarterly Bulletin. BOU members will continue to qualify for a discounted rate of UK£12. We, at ABC, welcome the change and encourage ABC members to join BOC. A free sample copy of the Bulletin can be obtained from the Hon. Secretary, Michael Casement, at Dene Cottage, West Harting, Petersfield, Hants GU31 5PA, UK, or via e-mail: mbcasement@aol.com. Further details, including the contents of recent issues, can be viewed online at www.boc-online.org.

Source: British Ornithologists' Club press release

Mackinder's Eagle Owl—species or subspecies?

Mackinder's Eagle Owl *Bubo capensis mackinderi* is an uncommon inhabitant of montane areas and the granite shield of Zimbabwe and adjacent Mozambique. It occurs north to Ethiopia and the Kenyan highlands, where the subspecies *dillonii* is resident. These populations are rather isolated and in southern Africa the Cape Eagle Owl *Bubo capensis* is separated from Mackinder's by the low-lying Limpopo Valley and cannot interbreed under natural conditions (an important distinction in the Biological Species Concept). Mackinder's is remarkably like Cape Eagle Owl in appearance, but here similarities end. Mackinder's is much larger, weighing up to 1.6 kg (c20% heavier than Cape Eagle Owl). Because of this it can take larger prey and, in the Matobo Hills, Red Rock Hares *Pronolagus crassicaudatus* weighing c2.3 kg are preferred. Another, more important difference is found in their calls. Vernon & Shirley Tarr report that they were unable to attract *mackinderi* in the Matopos using a tape of the South African form. Claus König, who has studied owls in Europe, Africa and South America for over 30 years, presented evidence in a paper at the 5th World Conference on Birds of Prey and Owls that plumage patterns and colorations are less important in mutual recognition than vocalisations in these nocturnal birds. This may explain the sometimes large individual variation in plumage patterns as well as colour morphs in owls. The vocabulary of all species is totally inherited and therefore taxonomically specific. König's findings are supported by DNA evidence. Slides, sonograms and tape-recordings were included during his presentation to lend support to the results. Taking this into account, it appears likely that Mackinder's Eagle Owl may be specifically distinct from Cape Eagle Owl. Those in possession of captive specimens of either species are encouraged to collect blood or feather samples for DNA analysis in order that this question can be resolved.

Source: Warren Goodwin in litt. *February 2001*

African birding resources

Over the last two months, the *Birding Africa* team of Callan Cohen and Claire Spottiswoode have updated their website with a number of new items including African bird checklists. If you are interested in downloadable checklists for various regions of the continent, you may wish to visit www.birding-africa.com (under 'Checklists'). Phil Hockey, Peter Ryan, Richard Dean and Sharron Hampson supplied the most up-to-date official Roberts list covering the southern African Region, while Ian Sinclair, Peter Ryan, Phil Hockey and Patrice Christy made available their hot-off-the-press Afrotropics list (the baseline for an upcoming book on the birds of sub-Saharan Africa), and there is also a list for the entire continent and its islands. The lists are currently available in zipped format for PC users, and Mac downloads should be forthcoming in the near future. Accompanying these lists, are explanations of the systematic order used, as well as a discussion of the changing taxonomy of southern African birds and some predictions as to which taxa may be the focus of forthcoming revision. The team would welcome suggestions for further regions to be covered.

Source: Callan Cohen in litt. *May 2001*

Southern Africa and Indian Ocean Islands

Relocated Aldabra Rails doing well

In an attempt to bolster the long-term survival of Aldabra Rail *Dryolimnas (cuvieri) aldabranus* nine pairs from Malabar were relocated to Picard Island, which has been declared free of cats, in 2000. Aldabra Rail is the last surviving flightless bird taxon of the Indian Ocean islands, only occurring on two islands on the Aldabra atoll, after having been exterminated by domestic cats on all other islands. It closely resembles, and is usually considered a subspecies of, White-throated Rail *Dryolimnas (cuvieri) cuvieri* of Madagascar, which can still fly. All relocated pairs bred successfully, raising more young, and faster, than a control group on Malabar. After eight months the population had grown to at least 30 birds, with no known adult mortalities to date.

Source: Africa—Birds & Birding *5 (5), p 11*

Oxpecker declines

A new report, published in *Biol. Conserv.*, indicates that both Red-billed *Buphagus erythrorhynchus* and Yellow-billed Oxpeckers *B. africanus* are declining in southern Africa as a result of the widespread use of cattle dipping as a preventive measure against ticks, upon which the oxpeckers feed. Evidence from the Caprivi Strip, to which area in Namibia, both species are virtually confined, suggests that Yellow-billed Oxpecker could soon be regionally extinct, due to the loss of their preferred species of ticks.

Source: Biol. Conserv. *92, pp 241–247*

ADU report

The Avian Demography Unit (ADU) report for 2000 is now available on the Internet at http://www.uct.ac.za/depts/stats/adu. Follow the on-screen instructions. The report provides a useful synopsis of the unit's multifarious activities in the fields of bird conservation and monitoring. ADU is a research unit of the University of Cape Town, within the Department of Statistical Sciences.

Source: Dr Les Underhill in litt. *March 2001*

Oldest raptor

A Pale Chanting Goshawk *Melierax canorus*, ringed as an adult at Joubert, South Africa, on 13 December 1975, was found dead 21 km from the same locality on 17 July 2000. The elapsed time is 24 years and seven months, making it the oldest raptor known from southern Africa. The individual, which was probably hit by a car (apparently the most common cause of death in the species), could have been considerably older.

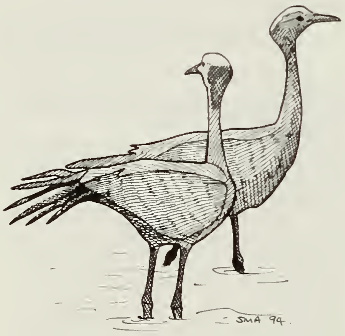
Source: Africa—Birds & Birding *5 (5), p 14*

White Blue Crane

A leucistic Blue Crane *Anthropoides paradisea* paired with a normal individual and bred successfully on at least three occasions during a five-year period in the Overberg, Western Cape Province, South Africa. The bird was entirely white but lacked the red eyes and pink bill of a true albino; its progeny all possessed normal blue-grey plumage. In late 2000, it had not been seen for several months, suggesting that it may finally have succumbed due to the debilitating effects of its abnormal plumage.

Source: Africa—Birds & Birding *5 (5), p 21*

Large-scale alien predator eradication in the Seychelles



Blue Crane *Anthropoides paradisea* by Mark Andrews

The Seychelles harbour several bird species threatened by introduced predators, notably rats and cats. Within the granitic Seychelles only four islands were considered rat free before 1995. In that year Brown Rat *Rattus norvegicus* was accidentally introduced to Frégate and quickly became established. This privately owned island of 219 ha holds approximately 50% of the world population of Seychelles Magpie-Robin *Copsychus sechellarum*. In mid-2000, Seychelles Ministry of Environment and Transport coordinated a project to rid Frégate, Curieuse and Denis islands of rats. Curieuse is the fifth largest granitic island (286 ha) and is within a Marine National Park. Denis, a small, flat coralline island (143 ha) is privately owned and operated as a tourism resort. Island owners and managers and BirdLife Seychelles were involved in the planning and implementation of the costly operation, which was funded by the government and island owners. The eradication was conducted in June–July 2000 by a team from New Zealand led by Don Merton. A helicopter was used to drop poison bait on the islands. Brodifacoum, though highly poisonous to mammals, is less dangerous to birds and reptiles, and poses no risk to invertebrates. The operation in Frégate posed more difficulties because of the populations of Seychelles Magpie-Robin and Seychelles Fody *Foudia sechellarum*. A small population of Moorhen *Gallinula chloropus* also occurs there. The other islands held only seabirds, shorebirds and alien landbirds. BirdLife Seychelles, assisted by the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds and the GEF-funded Seychelles Avian Ecosystem, managed a programme to hold all the endemic birds in captivity. The entire population of Magpie-Robins was caught and held in aviaries positioned in various territories throughout the island for several months. Over 300 Seychelles Fodies and c10 Moorhens were also kept in captivity. The large numbers of birds in cages, the range of specialised skills required for their management and problems in sourcing equipment, bird food and other materials all made for a difficult operation. However, the magpie-robins conditioned well and even bred in captivity. In August–September 2000, the birds were released and adapted well: one pair of magpie-robins started breeding on their first day of liberty. The wild population of Seychelles Fody appears unaffected by the poison, although on other islands alien species such as Madagascar Fody *Foudia madagascariensis* and Barred Ground-Dove *Geopelia striata* were severely impacted. Eight months after the last poison drop in July no rats have been seen and the eradication is an apparent success. Feral cats, which occurred on Denis and Curieuse islands, have also been exterminated. Various control measures have been put in place, particularly on Frégate, to prevent re-invasion.

Source: Nirmal Jivan Shah in litt. *February 2001*

Tristan Albatross numbers stable

Listed as Endangered by BirdLife International (2000), Tristan Albatross *Diomedea* [*exulans*] *dabbenena* is one of a suite of albatross taxa that has come under increasing conservation scrutiny due to recent wholesale reviews of the family's taxonomy. This taxon, which is virtually entirely restricted as a breeder, to Gough Island in the Tristan da Cunha group, has suffered from a chronic lack of data concerning population trends and its distribution at sea. A new study, based principally on data collected in 1999 and 2000, by Peter Ryan and colleagues, reveals that the conservation prospects for this form are better than previously realised. The all-important Gough population is apparently stable and the authors suggest that total numbers are somewhere below 10,000 individuals. The team also collected valuable new data concerning its breeding biology, recruitment rates and at-sea movements. At least two birds were seen over the main island of Tristan, where breeding has not been reported since the 1960s and the authors recommend that the species could be downlisted to Vulnerable in future inventories of globally threatened species.

Source: Bird Conserv. Intern. *11, pp 35–48*

Madagascar Teal breeding biology

A recent communication has provided the first description of the nest and eggs of the globally threatened Madagascar Teal *Anas bernieri*. A total of eight nests, all in mangroves near Lake Ambaratamaty, have been discovered since 1997.

Source: Bull. Br. Ornithol. Cl. *121, pp 64–67*

New technique tracks movements of Wandering Albatross

A new and cheap technique, dubbed the geo-locator system (GLS), has been used to track the movements of Wandering Albatrosses *Diomedea exulans* from the Crozet Islands. The technique uses a simple photometer that measures ambient light and stores the information on a chip. When the device is retrieved, the data can be downloaded into a computer. Comparing the time of day with an internal clock gives the local longitude, while day-length information can be used to determine latitude. The information permits two fixes per day and is only accurate to c100 km, but for detecting movement among wide-ranging species this is perfectly adequate. The albatrosses equipped with GLS devices all returned to the island a year later and four devices that stored data for more than six months were retrieved. Contrary to the widespread belief that Wandering Albatrosses circle the globe between breeding attempts, the monitored individuals moved to specific areas where they remained throughout the year. While the two males moved into cold waters south of the polar front, in the Indian Ocean and beyond New Zealand, the two females chose warmer waters, one staying south-west of Madagascar, the other in the Agulhas Retroflection south of Africa. The difference in latitude between the sexes suggests that females are exposed to a much greater risk of being killed by tuna longline fisheries.

Source: Africa—Birds & Birding *5 (6), p 13*

Transfrontier park

Established by virtue of a formal treaty, signed in April 1999, between South Africa and Botswana, the Kgalagadi Transfrontier Park came into being in May 2000. The new protected area and spirit of international cooperation offers hope for the future of this area.

Source: Oryx *34, p 248*

New bird record from the Mascarenes

Short-tailed Shearwater *Puffinus tenuirostris*, which breeds in Australia, is known in the south-west Indian Ocean only from a sight record off South Africa, thus the discovery of a specimen, preserved in the Natural History Museum, Tring, found on Rodrigues, in the Mascarenes, in June 1974, is significant.

Source: Bull. Br. Ornithol. Cl. *120, pp 259–260*

Bustard taxonomy and the history of Africa's arid zones

Heuglin's Bustard *Neotis heuglinii* by Mark Andrews

A study, by Callan Cohen of the Percy FitzPatrick Institute, South Africa, aims to elucidate the relationships between bustards in order to examine how these can provide clues to the history of Africa's arid zones. Climatic fluctuations in response to glaciation cycles are known to have resulted in alternating periods of moist forests and dry areas across the African continent. It has been speculated that during the Pleistocene an arid corridor linked Africa's current arid zones in the south-west, in Namibia, Botswana and South Africa, and the north-east, in Ethiopia, Somalia, Kenya and northern Tanzania. This would explain the striking similarity of both animals and plants between those two zones. Because 23 of the world's 27 bustard species occur in these zones, they are ideal species for examining the history of Africa's dry areas. An understanding of bustard relationships is therefore essential, and the study will construct the family's phylogeny, using genetic, plumage, morphometric, vocal and behavioural characteristics. This research will also provide insight into conservation priorities and management.

Source: Africa—Birds & Birding *5 (6), p 14*

Dry-forest conservation prospects in Madagascar

Traditionally, Malagasy dry forests have been considered one of the most distinct, but least threatened ecosystems of this remarkably diverse region. New research, based principally in Mikea Forest, in south-west Madagascar, which supports important populations of two globally threatened species, Subdesert Mesite *Monias benschi* and Long-tailed Ground-Roller *Uratelornis chimaera*, as well as extremely rich flora and reptile communities, has revealed an alarming decrease in primary forest cover. Using satellite imagery, the team, headed by Nathalie Seddon, discovered that the extent of primary forest has declined by 15.6% between 1962 and 1999, with the rate of loss, measured at 0.35% per annum in 1962–1964, having also increased, to 0.93% in recent years. In a recent paper, Seddon and her co-workers present a number of proposals for the conservation of dry forests in this region, including the establishment of a large protected area north of Manombo, a network of community-based conservation areas throughout Mikea Forest, development projects for agriculture and a regional research and education centre.

Source: Oryx *34, pp 287–304*

East Africa

Djibouti waterbird counts

Between 4 and 12 February 2001, a team of ornithologists from the UK and Djibouti undertook high-tide roost counts along 24.5 km of the south-east coast of Djibouti. Internationally important populations of Crab Plover *Dromas ardeola*, Lesser Sand-Plover *Charadrius mongolus*, Terek Sandpiper *Xenus cinereus* and probably Saunders' Tern *Sterna saundersi* were found.

Source: Geoff and Hilary Welch in litt. 2001

Lammergeiers again at Hell's Gate, Kenya

Hell's Gate National Park, situated c75 km north-west of Kenya's capital, Nairobi, was once famous for its Lammergeiers (Bearded Vultures) *Gypaetus barbatus* that nested on a cliff. The last breeding record is from 1980 and the last reliable sighting, of a lone adult, dates from 1987. Thanks to coordinated efforts by the local management committee and park staff, young Lammergeiers once again flew in the area in April 2000. Permission had been obtained to remove second (or 'Abel') chicks from nests in Ethiopia in December 1999 and two were successfully reared on a ranch near Nairobi. They were placed into a 'nest' cave, a few metres above the traditional Lammergeier nest site, on 17 March 2000, where they were fed via a long chute. Fitted with radio transmitters, they fledged on 15 April and have since wandered more than 40 km from their 'home', sometimes staying away for up to a week before returning. It is expected that they will disperse during the next few years before, hopefully, feeling the urge to return to Hell's Gate.

Source: Africa—Birds & Birding *5 (6), p 18*

ARCOS and the Albertine Rift

We recently received a copy of *Backbone*, the newsletter of the Albertine Rift Conservation Society (ARCOS), of which the latest issue was published through sponsorship by the Swedish Society for Nature Conservation. Within its 12 pages there is news of a wealth of current conservation initiatives within the region. More information concerning ARCOS can be most easily sought on the internet at http://www.wcmc.org.uk/arcos.

Source: Backbone *7, December 2000*

Crested Guineafowl–monkey association

Avian–primate associations are well documented, although rarely for ground-dwelling species of birds. Nonetheless, such relationships have been previously reported for Crested Guineafowl *Guttera pucherani*. A recent primate survey in Kibale National Park, Uganda, provides further information for this species, which at this site was observed associating with three primate species, particularly l'Hoest's Monkey *Ceropithecus l'hoesti* (the most terrestrial of its group in this area). The latter fact, as well as the primate's activity patterns, appears to motivate this association.

Source: Ibis *143, pp 310–312*

Meru National Park

A checklist of 431 bird species recorded in Meru National Park has recently been produced and is available by e-mail from Mark Mallalieu, its compiler, at mallal@ksc.th.com. One of Kenya's most beautiful national parks, Meru has been off the tourist circuit for some time, largely because of the lack of accommodation and the low densities of large mammals. However, several accommodation options are now available, ranging from basic to luxurious. Birdwatching is superb and recent studies have revealed the presence of several species not previously known to occur in the area, such as Lead-coloured Flycatcher *Myioparus plumbeus* and Green-capped Eremomela *Eremomela scotops*. The endemic Hinde's Babbler *Turdoides hindei* occurs in small numbers and the very rare (in Kenya) Black-and-white Flycatcher *Bias musicus* is occasionally recorded and may be regular.

Source: Mark Mallalieu in litt. *April 2001*

West Africa

Golden Eagle breeding in Mali

A nest of Golden Eagle *Aquila chrysaetos* with two nestlings was discovered in the Adrar des Ifoghas, north-east Mali, on 12 January 2000. This constitutes the first documented breeding record for the species in West Africa.

Source: Alauda *68, pp 327–328*

Time running out for kites in the Cape Verdes

We have recently (*Bull. ABC* 8: 7) reported on the perilous position of the endemic Cape Verde Kite *Milvus (milvus) fasciicauda*. A further paper, based on surveys for both this taxon and Black Kite *Milvus m. migrans* in 1999, reports the discovery of just two *fasciicauda*, on Santo Antão, and one *migrans*, on Boavista. Time appears to have just about evaporated for both and their imminent extinction appears assured.

Source: Bird Conserv. Intern. *10, pp 361–369*

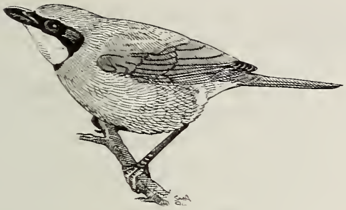
Birds of Mt Kupé and more

The latest issue of *Malimbus*, the journal of the West African Ornithological Society, contains the usual panoply of material that will be welcomed by those interested in this region. There are important checklists detailing the avifaunas of Mt Oku and Mt Kupe, in Cameroon. The latter is a particularly impressive piece of work that will be of inestimable value to all birders visiting the mountain. Elsewhere in this issue, Gerhard Nikolaus builds on a theme that has appeared twice in recent pages of this bulletin, bird exploitation for traditional medicine, in this instance in Nigeria. Short notes include documentation of the first breeding record of Hadada Ibis *Bostrychia hagedash* in Senegal, the second Böhm's Flufftail *Sarothrura boehmi* in Nigeria and a new interpretation of the real identity of Boyd Alexander's record of White-backed Vulture *Gyps africanus* on Bioko.

Source: Malimbus, *23, pp 1–76*

Intriguing swifts in the Cape Verdes

Interest in the avifauna of the indisputably Afrotropical Cape Verdes has multiplied greatly in recent years, partially as a result of the recent checklist (Hazevoet 1995) and because of its traditional treatment within the Palearctic realm. In February 1999 Kris De Rouck and his fellow observers



Mount Kupé Bush-Shrike *Malaconotus kupensis* by Mark Andrews

observed and photographed four as yet unidentified swifts on the island of Boavista. Investigations point to them being Bates' Swift *Apus batesi*, which occurs from west Cameroon to Gabon and Congo, with scattered records elsewhere from Nigeria to Sierra Leone. De Rouck invites further comment on his description and photographs, and those with experience of Bates' Swift are encouraged to take a look at the article.

Source: Dutch Birding *23, pp 24–25*

Migration in southern Bénin

In an, as yet, only partially published paper, Marie-Rose Anciaux examines the migration phenology and status of bird species occurring within interior south Bénin. The first part covers 14 species of non-passerines, including four raptors, two pigeons, four cuckoos and two nightjars, in considerable detail. Seasonal movements and others are described and information gathered during the present study compared with data published from neighbouring regions. The paper's second part will cover the remainder of the non-passerines and passerines.

Source: Alauda *68, pp 311–320*

Baumann's Greenbul

Following on from his recent note in this bulletin, Lincoln Fishpool has provided a comprehensive reassessment of the status, distribution and habitat requirements of the frequently misidentified Baumann's Greenbul *Phyllastrephus baumanni*. The species' status in all range states is re-examined and a colour plate, by Nik Borrow, illustrates it and its close relatives. The author's extensive correspondence and re-evaluation of the species' identification characters have revealed that a number of published observations of *P. baumanni* must now be considered unsafe.

Source: Bull. Br. Ornithol. Cl. *120, pp 213–229*

Site fidelity of Palearctic passerines on their winter grounds

Volker Salewski and colleagues have been studying winter site fidelity of Palearctic passerines in Comoé National Park, Côte d'Ivoire, during 1994 to 1997, principally using mist-netting techniques. Three species were most frequently caught: Willow Warbler *Phylloscopus trochilus*, Pied Flycatcher *Ficedula hypoleuca* and Melodious Warbler *Hippolais polyglotta*, but the researchers obtained few resightings or retraps of marked individuals suggesting that, for the two warbler species at least, site fidelity is low and that these species may be only transients in the northern Guinea savanna zone. On the other hand, site fidelity and duration of stay both appeared high in Pied Flycatcher, and may also have been so for Whinchat *Saxicola rubetra*, although most of the data for this species was circumstantial.

Source: Vogelwarte *40, pp 298–301*

Grey Heron breeds in the Cape Verdes

The recent, June 2000, discovery of Grey Heron *Ardea cinerea* breeding in the Cape Verde islands, on Santo Antão, brings the number of bird species known to breed in the archipelago to 42.

Source: Alauda *69, p 18*

North Africa

Kelp Gull in Mauritania

The successful Kelp Gull *Larus dominicanus* has been expanding its range, on both sides of the Atlantic, in recent years. The first records of the species from Mauritania (and the Western Palearctic) were made in Banc d'Arguin National Park, in April 1997–June 1999. Photographic documentation of these birds has recently been made, and was accompanied by a separate paper taking an in-depth look at the identification of the species.

Source: Birding World *14, pp 110–125*

Terek Sandpiper wintering and Pacific Golden Plover in the Gulf of Gabes, Tunisia

In 1999, Terek Sandpiper *Xenus cinereus* was observed in Tunisia's Gulf of Gabes, on 23–24 February (one at El Hicha and two at Mahrès), 4 March (one) and 29 December (one). At least three were still present on 3 January 2000. These records suggest that some individuals wintered in the gulf during two consecutive winters. Only one previous winter record, from January 1975, has been published, whereas at least six records are known from autumn and spring migration. A separate paper presents a description and photograph of a Pacific Golden Plover *Pluvialis fulva* observed in the same area, on 24 February 1999.

Source: Alauda *68, p 235; 69, pp 203–204*

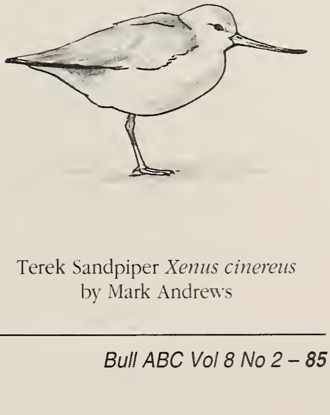
Great Bustard decline in Morocco

Results of a spring 1999 census of Great Bustard *Otis tarda* in north-west Morocco, which discovered a total of just 64 individuals at four sites, including displaying males at three, and evidence previously published for a range contraction in the country, suggest that the north-west African population is now in severe danger of extinction in the medium term, unless conservation action can be swiftly implemented.

Source: Oryx *34, pp 141–146*

Bird hunting threat in Egyptian 'protected areas'

In autumn 2000, bird hunting was permitted at Zaranik Protected Area, Egypt, an Important Bird Area (IBA), part of a Ramsar site and a Specially Protected Area under the Barcelona Convention. Earlier in the season hunting in Zaranik had been restricted, based on the orders of the Egyptian Environmental Affairs Agency in accordance with the law prohibiting hunting inside nature reserves. But the Governor of north Sinai, bowing to public pressure, later authorised bird hunting at Zaranik. At another protected site, the Governor of El Faiyum is requesting Egyptian authorities to permit bird hunting at Lake Qarun and



Terek Sandpiper *Xenus cinereus* by Mark Andrews

Great Bustard *Otis tarda*
by Ian Lewington

repeal its Protected Area status. If granted, it would be the first time a Protected Area had been cancelled in Egypt, thus setting a dangerous precedent. Lake Qarun is an Important Bird Area (IBA), internationally renowned for its wintering waterfowl. In the 1980s, visiting Italian and Maltese hunters killed large numbers of birds there, but a BirdLife campaign led to hunting being prohibited and bird populations have recovered. The lake is also under threat from development, which affects both the important bird habitats and ecotourism plans for the site. Bird hunting is widespread in the autumn along Egypt's Mediterranean coast, from the Libyan border to Gaza. The main target species is Common Quail *Coturnix coturnix*, but millions of birds are caught, including globally threatened species like the Corncrake *Crex crex*.

Source: Sandgrouse *23, p 6*

Morocco: waterbirds from the Sidi Moussa-Walidia wetlands

This wetland area, which is of international importance for a number of species of waterbirds, has been the subject of a recently published (March 1994–February 1996) study. The results demonstrate that the area is of only marginal importance for breeding birds: just ten species nest there, with the globally threatened Marbled Duck *Marmaronetta angustirostris*, which only breeds occasionally, the most significant of these. This species was recorded during approximately 50% of counts, with a maximum of 341 in November 1995. However, the wetlands are the third most important for overwintering shorebirds in Morocco, as well as a significant stopover site for passage birds in both spring and autumn. Waders are numerically the most important group using the area, with up to 1,646 Black-tailed Godwit *Limosa limosa* and 4,168 Dunlin *Calidris alpina* counted during the study period. Notable numbers of gulls also utilise the site, including up to almost 600 Audouin's Gull *Larus audouinii*. A complete list of the 114 waterbird species reported from the site, full census data from the study period and comparisons with previous published work are also presented in the current paper.

Source: Alauda *68, pp 275–294*

Evolutionary histories of Atlantic Island Chaffinches

A recent re-evaluation of the evolution of Chaffinch *Fringilla coelebs* populations in Europe, north-west Africa and the Atlantic Islands, using mtDNA analysis, has reached some interesting novel conclusions. European *coelebs* and the North African *africana* are closely related, despite their relative lack of plumage similarity. However, *africana*'s close neighbour, the morphologically similar *spodiogenys*, appears to represent an ancient linkage between Chaffinch and Blue Chaffinch *F. teydea*, and is significantly different genetically from *africana*. It appears likely, on the basis of the new research, that Chaffinch colonised the Azores, probably from Iberia, and thereafter reached Madeira and the Canaries (a total of five taxa have been recognised in the Atlantic Islands). Glacial events, which subsequently displaced or partially displaced the Iberian populations, leading to a recolonisation of this region from Africa, can be taken to account for the close links between *africana* and the *coelebs* group.

Source: Molecular Phylogenetics and Evol. *11, pp 201–212;*
Br. Birds *94, pp 121–124*

Morocco: avifauna of the Marrakech region

Another recent paper in the French journal *Alauda* examines the avifauna of this frequently visited part of Morocco. It is set to appear in three parts, the first two, providing the general introduction and overview of the region and species accounts for the non-passerines, have already appeared. In total 272 species have been recorded in the area, including 146 as breeders (most regularly). This review, principally based on observations made in the 1980s, provides the most comprehensive analysis of the avifauna of a single site in the country produced to date.

Source: Alauda *68, pp 301–310; 69, 167–202*

Auduoin's Gull *Larus audouinii*
by Martin Elliot

Requests for Information

Request for observations from Côte-d'Ivoire (Ivory Coast)

A project to compile an annotated species list for the birds of Côte-d'Ivoire (Ivory Coast) has started recently. The authors (addresses below) would appreciate receiving species lists and additional information such as numbers, seasonal appearance, habitat, breeding and moult of species in Côte-d'Ivoire from anyone who has been birding there.

Demande d'information sur les observations d'oiseaux faites en Côte-d'Ivoire

Une initiative pour l'édition d'un livre sur les oiseaux de Côte-d'Ivoire est en course. Les auteurs seraient heureux de recevoir toutes informations additionnelles telles que des données numériques, les observations saisonnières, habitats, nidifications et mues.

Addresses: Hilaire Yaokokore Beibro, Société de Conservation de la Nature de Côte-d'Ivoire (SCN-CI), s/c Department de Zoologie, Université de Cocody/Abidjan, 22 BP 368 Abidjan 22, Côte-d'Ivoire. Tel: + 225 07985434. E-mail: scnci@hotmail.com. Volker Salewski, Prinz-Rupprecht-Str. 34, 93053 Regensburg, Germany. Tel: + (0) 417086788. Hugo Rainey, School of Biology, Bute Medical Building, University of St Andrews, St Andrews, Fife KY16 9TS, UK. E-mail: hjr3@st-andrews.ac.uk.

Avian Demograhy Unit's 'bird sightings' scheme

Les Underhill reports that Avian Demography Unit's (ADU), South Africa, 'bird sightings' system is working routinely. Currently there are three species for which ADU would appreciate all records: White Pelican *Pelecanus onocrotalus*, in order to determine whether there is much/any exchange between breeding populations; Caspian Tern *Sterna caspia*, to evaluate patterns of movement (observations of individuals with colour leg flags are particularly welcome); and Corncrake *Crex crex*, as data for this globally threatened species are likely to be needed in the future. For the pelican and tern the area of interest is anywhere south of Angola, Zambia and Mozambique (inclusive). For Corncrake, submissions from anywhere in Africa are valuable. Past observations are also useful. Any researcher who wants to add species to this list is welcome to ask for their inclusion and there is no need to contact the ADU in advance of making the request. Researchers can subsequently extract the information they require from the archives. ADU is building up a list of species in southern Africa for which all records should be archived, and welcomes suggestions for candidate species; in the meantime, please submit any observations considered notable. If you need further information on a submitted record, or perhaps wish to query a record (bearing in mind that no vetting takes place), make contact directly with the observer (the e-mail address is part of the record). To submit a record, click 'Bird Sightings' on the ADU home page, fill in the form that opens up, and click 'send'. Contributed by Prof. Les Underhill, Director, Avian Demography Unit, Dept. of Statistical Sciences, University of Cape Town, Rondebosch 7701, South Africa. Tel: +27 21 650 3227. Fax: +27 21 650 3434. Web http://www.uct.ac.za/depts/stats/adu/.

Conservation of Black-crowned Crane

The International Crane Foundation and Wetlands International (WI) are managing a programme for the conservation of Black Crowned Crane *Balearica pavonina*. This characteristic and popular bird of Sahelian wetlands has suffered serious declines throughout its range in recent years and is listed as Vulnerable in the IUCN list of threatened species. In 2000, WI conducted a range-wide status survey and drafted a conservation action plan for the species, which in West Africa occurs from Senegal to Chad, and in the east from parts of Chad and Central African Republic, Sudan, Ethiopia, to Kenya and Uganda. In 2001, WI is aiming for a repeat survey, and would welcome all types of data/information, especially country, site, number, dates, etc. In particular, WI is eager to receive additional information on populations in southern Sudan, northern Central African Republic, south-west Mali, east Burkina Faso and Guinea Bissau. Please contact Emmanuel T. C. Williams, Black Crowned Crane Programme Coordinator, Wetlands International, 407 Cité Djily Mbaye,
B. P. 8060, Dakar-Yoff, Senegal. Tel: +221-820-6478; fax: +221-820-6479; e-mail: emmanuelwilliams@hotmail.com.

International Ornithological Congress, 2002

Following the Durban Congress, the next International Ornithological Congress (IOC) is to be held in Beijing, on 11–17 August 2002. The first circular, Call for Contributed Papers, was produced earlier this year. Full details can be found on the congress website at http://www.ioc.org.cn. For further details contact Liu Feng, IOC 2002 Secretariat, e-mail: infocenter@ioc.org.cn.

Firefinches

Ian Hinze is currently making captive observations of Mali Firefinch *Lagonosticta virata*; thus far ten young have been bred from two pairs. Vocalisations are poorly known, save recordings made by Bob Payne and Clive Barlow. Ian is donating his own recordings, when complete, to the British Library National Sound Archive (NSA), but is particularly interested to gain all field data on this species. Interestingly, Bob Payne states the eye-ring to be pink, which it is occasionally. Clement *et al.* regard the eye-ring as yellow, which it also is, on occasion. Most of his captive individuals possess a yellow eye-ring, but when held in the hand it appears pink. To compound the problem, the eye-rings can also look grey. Obviously, the eye-ring may be subject to flushing, such as when in breeding condition. Ian has witnessed the same phenomenon in Dybowski's Twinspot *Euschistospiza dybowskii*, which also contradicts the usual description of this species. In Dybowski's the eye-ring appears narrow on occasion and then broader at other times, and also changed from a definite grey to reddish pink. If you can assist Ian with his research, please contact him via ianhinze@lineone.net.

Bird records from Malawi

Lawrence Luhanga is coordinating much of the atlas and other field work on birds in Malawi. He is keen to receive data from anyone who has been there on a birding trip and not submitted their checklist and notes. Please contact Lawrence Luhanga, Executive Secretary, Malawi Ornithological Society, c/o Department of Ornithology, Museums of Malawi, P O Box 30360, Chichiri, Blantyre 3, Malawi. E-mail: nature50@hotmail.com or mos@malawibirds.org; website: www.malawibirds.org.

Bird images needed

Shama Books, an Ethiopian publishing company, are currently collecting images of the endemic birds of Ethiopia. If you have high-quality pictures please contact them at the following address: Shama Books, PO Box 8135, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. E-mail: shama@telecom.net.et. Tel: +251-1-553959. Fax: +251-1-551010.

African Bird Club *Conservation Fund* Update

Conservation Awards

Five conservation awards have been made since the publication of the last Bulletin. The Nigerian Conservation Foundation (NCF) received UK£800 for the publication of an activity manual for use by young people visiting NCF's Lekki Nature Reserve. ABC also made a contribution of UK£750 towards a feasibility study for the establishment of a monthly waterbird-monitoring scheme along the south-east coast of Djibouti. Tadesse Woldemariam Gole and his colleagues from the Ethiopia Agricultural Research Organisation were awarded UK£740 for an ornithological survey of the Gambella Plains in south-west Ethiopia. The Groupe Ornithologie du Maroc received UK£740 for the study and protection of a colony of Lesser Kestrels *Falco naumanni*, a globally threatened species, in the town of Meknes in central Morocco. Finally, a contribution of UK£390 was made towards the purchase of ringing equipment for use by students at the University of Natal, South Africa. Initially the equipment will be used to continue a long-term study of bird populations in an area of coastal forest near Durban.

ABC/NHBS Book Awards

Three awards were made this year, the successful applicants being Dr S A Tamungang from Cameroon, Belay Abdissa from Ethiopia and Philip Kipchumba from Kenya. Each applicant will receive UK£100 worth of books courtesy of the Natural History Book Service. Applications are now invited for next year's awards. For details of how to apply, visit the ABC website or see page 79 of this bulletin.

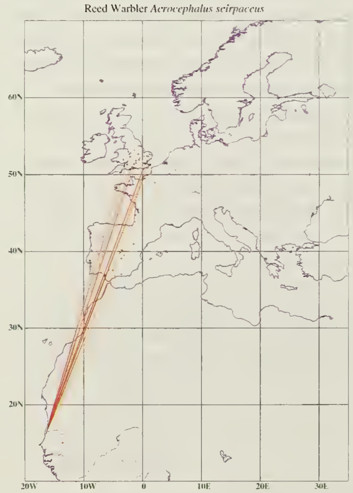
ABC Conservation Award

The second ABC Conservation Award was won by a team from Nature Kenya for a survey of the Mau Narok Molo Grasslands Important Bird Area (IBA) in central Kenya. The Mau Narok Molo Grasslands IBA support important populations of two globally threatened species: Sharpe's Longclaw *Macronyx sharpei* and Aberdare Cisticola *Cisticola aberdare*.

Rob Lucking

Errata

A number of errata in *Bull. ABC* 8 (1) are as follows: the uncredited photos on p. 2 (Fig. 1) and p. 4 (both) are by Chris Bowden; on p. 48, it should be noted that the record of Spotted Sandpiper *Actitis macularia* in the Cape Verdes has been accepted (in *Bull. Zoöl. Mus. Univ. Amsterdam* 17: 19–32); on p. 54 it should have been stated that the recent survey of Annobón Island was made in November 2000; and on p. 64 it was stated that Purple Heron *Ardea purpurea* of the race *bournei* was now known to breed in only one tree, but there is another nesting tree—long known—in Boa Entrada which although small is still extant.



The map (left) shows ringing recovery data for Reed Warbler *Acrocephalus scirpaceus* between Senegal and Europe, which had been intended for inclusion with the note concerning ringing recoveries on pp 46–47 of the last issue, but due to production problems had to be held over until this part of Volume 8.

Forest loss in the Ulugurus, Tanzania and the status of Uluguru Bush Shrike *Malaconotus alius*

Neil Burgess, Tom S. Romdal and Marcel Rahner

Les Monts Uluguru en Tanzanie orientale sont un site de grande importance ornithologique, possédant deux espèces d'oiseaux endémiques. L'une de celles-ci, le Gladiateur des Uluguru *Malaconotus alius*, est considérée comme un des oiseaux les plus rares d'Afrique. Des études récentes ont démontré que ses effectifs comprennent environ 1.200 couples, ce qui est plus du double des estimations précédentes. Cette population semble cependant limitée à la réserve forestière Uluguru Nord, qui contient moins de 100 km^2 de forêt, et où 16% de la forêt à des altitudes qui conviennent à l'espèce a été détruite depuis 1977 (une perte de plus de 20 km^2 de forêt). Malgré la bonne nouvelle que l'espèce survit en plus grand nombre qu'estimé auparavant, toute destruction supplémentaire de forêt du site entre 1.200 et 1.700 m d'altitude augmentera le risque de disparition de l'espèce.

Forest in the Uluguru Mountains of eastern Tanzania supports an exceptional biodiversity, including two endemic bird species and similarly high rates of endemism among other animals and plants. Following a Royal Society for the Protection of Birds–European Union project to plan conservation action in these mountains, the Danish Ornithological Society and Wildlife Conservation Society of Tanzania have obtained funding from DANIDA for a three-year project, which aims to initiate conservation in the region in collaboration with other local organisations.

During 2000 the project has mapped the area of remaining forest and undertaken a survey of the endemic Uluguru Bush Shrike *Malaconotus alius* (see below). The rate of forest loss will have a major

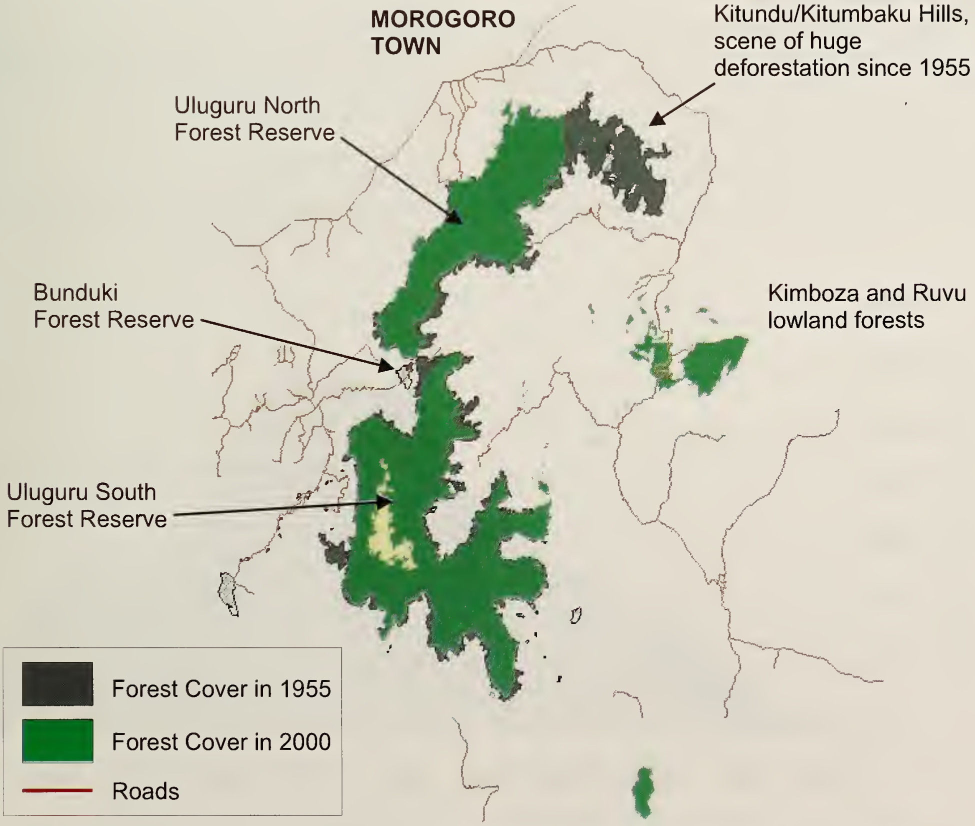

MOROGORO TOWN
Kitundu/Kitumbaku Hills, scene of huge deforestation since 1955
Uluguru North Forest Reserve
Bunduki Forest Reserve
Kimboza and Ruvu lowland forests
Uluguru South Forest Reserve
⬛ Forest Cover in 1955
🟩 Forest Cover in 2000
— Roads

Figure 1. Loss of submontane and montane forest in the Uluguru Mountains between 1955 and 2000.

impact on the habitat available for the Uluguru Bush Shrike, and hence on its long-term chances for survival. Aerial photographs from 1955 and 1977 permitted the former extent of forest cover to be determined. Ground surveys undertaken in 2000 have assessed the remaining forest area on the mountains, allowing some conclusions to be made on the degree of forest loss over time.

Forest loss

Between 1955 and 2000 forest cover on the Ulugurus declined from c300 km^2, to c220 km^2. Most loss occurred in submontane forests (at 500–1,500 m) outside the Catchment Forest Reserves of Uluguru North and Uluguru South. The forest loss included almost the entire area of non-reserved forest on the north-west margin of the Uluguru North Forest Reserve (Fig 1). This area of forest has been converted to farmland and remaining forest areas are underplanted with bananas as a cash crop. Within the Uluguru North and Uluguru South Catchment Forest Reserves the extent of forest cover remained constant over this period and even expanded slightly in some areas.

Uluguru Bush Shrike

This species is the rarest of the Ulugurus endemic birds and one of the rarest in Africa. It now appears confined to Uluguru North Forest Reserve (83.6 km^2), where it prefers forests at 1,200–1,700 m altitude in the submontane band. Regrettably, submontane forest was subject to the greatest destruction in 1955–1977 (Fig 2), a trend that has continued up to the present day.

Field work in the mid-1990s suggested that the population of Uluguru Bush Shrike was unlikely to exceed 1,000 individuals[1]. A detailed new survey was made over six weeks, in December 1999–January 2000, using randomly located points and tape playback methods. The survey provided a more precise population estimate of c1,200 pairs in Uluguru North Forest Reserve. No records were obtained from Uluguru South Forest Reserve (164.3 km^2), where the species was heard on one occasion in 1981. It is therefore tentatively concluded that the species now occurs only in Uluguru North Forest Reserve.

While it is encouraging that detailed surveys have raised the estimated population to 1,200 pairs, the loss of its preferred habitat in Uluguru North is of serious concern and the entire area of forest available to the species is now well below 100 km^2. The species is currently listed as Endangered[1], based on its tiny range at only one site. However, we are not overly pessimistic and believe that its chances of survival are greater than this status indicates. There is still available habitat in the Uluguru North Forest Reserve in good condition and related species of *Malaconotus* elsewhere in montane Africa appear able to survive in very small patches of forest.

Reference

1. BirdLife International 2000. *Threatened Birds of the World*. Cambridge, UK: BirdLife International & Barcelona: Lynx Edicions.

DOF, BirdLife Denmark, Vesterbrogade 138, DK-1620 Copenhagen, Denmark.
E-mails: Neil_Burgess@hotmail.com, tsromdal@zmuc.ku.dk.
Please direct all correspondence to Tom Romdal.

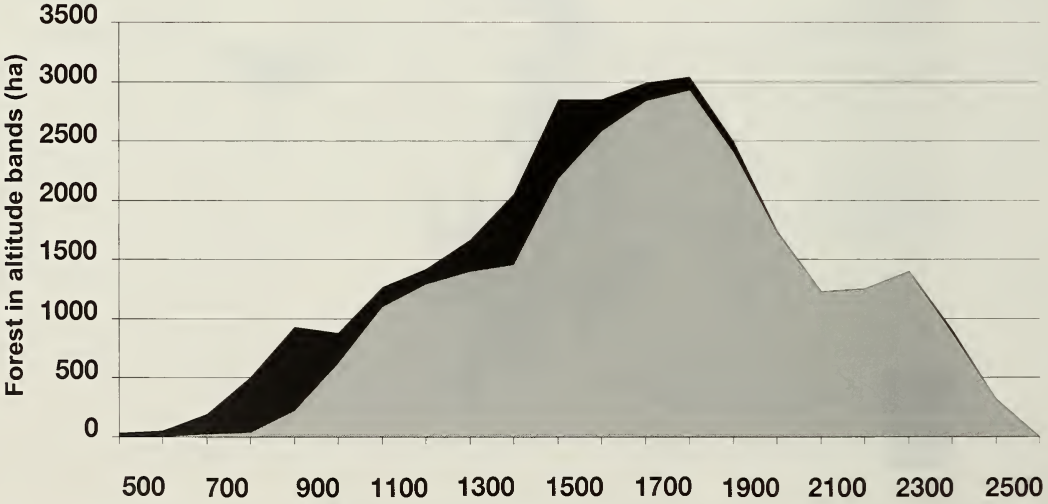


Figure 2. Altitudinal distribution of forest in the Ulugurus in 1955 (black and grey) and 1977 (grey only), excluding forests below 500 m. The trend of forest loss between 700 and 1,700 m altitude exhibited here has continued to the present day.

Is the endangered Long-billed (Moreau's) Tailorbird *Orthotomus* [*Artisornis*] *moreaui* safe in the East Usambaras?

Norbert J. Cordeiro[a], Veli M. Pohjonen[b] and Elia Mulungu[c]

Le statut de la Couturière de Moreau *Orthotomus* [*Artisornis*] *moreaui*, espèce ne se trouvant que dans les Usambaras orientaux en Tanzanie et dans le nord du Mozambique, est considéré comme Critique[4,13]. En vue de cette situation alarmante, une étude de population a été entreprise dans la Réserve naturelle d'Amani, Tanzanie, en juin 2000. Les résultats indiquent qu'il existe une petite population de 150–200 individus répandus sur le plateau des Usambaras orientaux, principalement à l'intérieur de la Réserve. Des précisions sur la population estimée sont présentées, ainsi que des observations générales faites pendant la période de janvier 2000–mars 2001; celles-ci mettent à jour les connaissances du statut actuel de l'espèce, son écologie et sa protection.

Background

Reg Moreau discovered Long-billed (Moreau's) Tailorbird *Orthotomus* [*Artisornis*] *moreaui* in 1930 in Amani, within the East Usambara Mountains, Tanzania[11]. It was not recorded from the area again until the 1970s when several new observations were reported[3,5,14,16]. Despite intensive searches in other Eastern Arc mountains, the species remains known only from the Amani and Nilo areas of the East Usambaras[4–6]. An isolated population on the Njesi Plateau, in Mozambique, has not been searched for since 1945[1,2,13]. The species is currently listed as Critical[13].

Since the 1970s very few individuals have been observed in the Amani area. Cordeiro[6] recorded it in Nilo Forest Reserve, 20 km north of Amani, in 1994. During the last 20 years fewer than 30 sightings have been made in Amani and Nilo, some possibly of the same individuals[4–6]. The few documented observations suggest that it resides in forest edge and large forest gaps[4,5,14], but its precise habitat requirements, biology and status are poorly understood.

Distribution and population estimate

Earlier records of the Long-billed Tailorbird centred on the Amani area[4,5], with recent reports from further north on the same plateau, as far as Mt. Nilo[6]. Prior to this new assessment of the distribution and abundance of the species, no population estimates had been made, though the lack of records in the 1980s and early 1990s suggested a population decline in the East Usambaras[4]. Given hindsight, insufficient attention had been paid to the correct habitat and most visits to the plateau had been rather short.

In June 2000, we conducted a pilot count of the tailorbird. Preliminary encounters with the species during an ongoing bird census conducted by NJC, covering a large part of the nature reserve and its environs, indicated that it prefers forest edges above 800 m[7]. Therefore, we concentrated subsequent efforts along forest edge on the plateau of Amani Nature Reserve, at 800–1,050 m.

Using playback of the most common vocalisation at 200 m intervals along the forest edge, a total of 84 point samples were made and 44 individuals were counted at 27 of these. As one-third of suitable habitat was sampled, we assume a conservative total estimate of 150–200 individuals. More than 50% of our records were of lone individuals. Because of this our estimate is likely to be low as the species regularly occurs in pairs, with one individual being more elusive than the other. Several large gaps within the forest and the large area of forest north and east of Monga and Derema to Nilo were not sampled. Thus far we have found the species to be most abundant in the Sangarawe to Monga areas, with fewer individuals west, east and south of these general locations.

The new population estimate, while conservative, may indicate an increase based on previous data[4,13]. Furthermore, the many observations at forest edge may contradict the previous suggestion by Collar & Stuart[5] that it is susceptible to forest disturbance. It is probable that increased knowledge of its distinctive vocalisations has heightened the species' detectability. Additionally, its apparent favoured habitat was investigated more thoroughly during our work than previously. Since the population study, Long-billed Tailorbird has been discovered at further forest-edge sites and within some large gaps inside forest (NJC, B Munisi, C McBride and M Joho pers obs 2000–2001).

General ecology

Habitat requirements

Previous reports have suggested that this secretive species is restricted to forest edge and clearings with vines and climbers[12]. It was also believed to prefer dark forest undergrowth[12], and more recent reports indicated that it could be partial to wetland habitats at the forest edge (W Newmark pers comm).

Our observations suggest the species is a retiring bird of dark undergrowth with a high density of vines and climbers, but as previously noted[6,14], it also ventures into sunlit and open areas within suitable habitat. While largely restricted to forest-edge habitat, possibly near water, we have also discovered the species in a large wetland glade and large gap deep within primary forest, indicating how poorly known its habits remain. Furthermore, Collar & Stuart[5] noted the population in Mozambique had probably been mistakenly reported by Benson[2] to be a canopy dweller. It should be noted that Benson[2] indicated the canopy to be of a mean height of c8 m, ie well within the range of our encounters of the species. In addition to its primary forest-edge and gap habitats, we have also found it in dense *Lantana* thickets adjacent to forest, indicating an ability to persist in relatively disturbed habitats with sufficient shelter and food.

Foraging behaviour

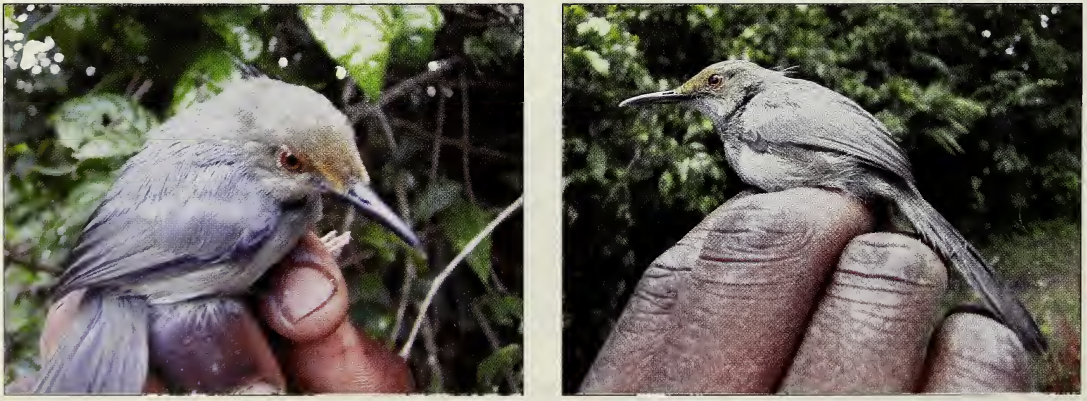
We have observed the species gleaning foliage of vines and dense shrubs, being rapid and deliberate in its movements through vegetation. While foraging, individuals largely remained in the understorey below 3 m. However, they occasionally work areas at 4–20 m. All observed prey have been invertebrates, many skilfully obtained by deep piercing of densely packed foliage. McEntee, Cordeiro & Moyer (in prep) have conducted a short, but in-depth quantitative study of the tailorbird's foraging ecology, which will be reported elsewhere. Unlike Stuart & Hutton[14] who reported it to be an occasional member of mixed-species foraging flocks, we have not observed it in such groupings in over 150 observations of at least 12 different pairs.

Breeding

There is no previous breeding information for the species. One of us (NJC) found two recently fledged young with parents in mid-October 2000, indicating that eggs are laid in September. Vocalisations of territorial pairs were more frequent in October–November, suggesting breeding activity during this period. The two young were observed until mid-March 2001, being fed by both parents until early February; subsequently parents and young have foraged separately, but still within a group. These are resident around the Amani Nature Reserve headquarters and will be monitored until July 2001. No definite nests have been located by us, though one believed to have been constructed by this species was discovered by R. Stjernstedt in Amani[9]. While the description in *Birds of Africa* implies that the nest was attibutable to this species, Fry[9] opined that photographs do not indicate the sewn leaves to be of the same plant in which it was constructed. We believe more definitive evidence of the species' nest is needed.

Vocalisations

Sclater & Moreau[12] described the species' vocalisation as 'percussive and mechanical, like a series of deliberate blows with a mallet on an iron peg'. Zimmerman *et al*[18] provide a very adequate description of one of the commonest calls: *tcheu-tcheu-tcheu-tcheu-tcheu*. Vocalisations are varied, with at least 2–3 variations on the above, and one highly specific rasping call given when contacting conspecifics.



Long-billed (Moreau's) Tailorbird *Orthotomus* [*Artisornis*] *moreaui* (N. J. Cordeiro)

Does competitive exclusion explain a disjunct distribution?

Stuart[15] speculated that Long-billed Tailorbird is sufficiently similar to two other species that probably share the same niche, that its restricted and disjunct distribution in the Njesi Plateau and East Usambaras could be explained by competitive exclusion. One of these species, Grey-backed Camaroptera (Bleating Warbler) *Camaroptera brachyura*, is sympatric with the tailorbird at most forest-edge sites, but not within interior forest gaps, which are occupied only by the tailorbird. Both share food resources in the lower strata, but the camaroptera also takes prey on the ground and rarely ventures above 3 m. This behaviour contrasts with that of the tailorbird, described above.

The other possible competitor mentioned by Stuart[15] is African Tailorbird *Orthotomus* [*Artisornis*] *metopias*. This is extremely rare in the Amani area but not uncommon at higher elevations on Nilo. As this species occurs on most of the intervening mountains between the East Usambaras and Njesi Plateau, but is rare in the Amani area, Stuart[15] suggested that this might be due to competition with Long-billed Tailorbird. In intervening areas he suggested that *metopias* could have outcompeted its congener.

Both species occur in the Nilo area[6]: *moreaui* within a large glade at the forest edge and the fairly common *metopias* at the forest edge and interior. It is difficult to ascertain numbers of *metopias* in the Amani area during Moreau's times as no estimates were made. Nonetheless, he infrequently observed the species in the 1930s[12], but prior to and following Moreau's residence in Amani there were few if any reports[8,14]. Despite an annual mist-netting programme, Newmark[10] has only sporadically captured a tiny number of *metopias* in Amani during the last two decades. Our current work has not produced any records (NJC pers obs), despite knowledge of its vocalisations. That *metopias* has declined is highly probable, but that this is due to competition with its congener as proposed by Stuart[15] appears unlikely. As *metopias* occurs within the interior of moist, dense forest, usually above 1,000 m, it is probable that its population at Amani was always small and its purported decrease may relate to this factor or a rapid decrease in available habitat between the late 1800s and 1980s. Long-billed Tailorbird is segregated by habitat.

Unresolved taxonomy?

When Sclater[11] described *moreaui* he placed it within the genus *Apalis*, with a clause that several characteristic features (ie greater bill length and number of tail feathers) could warrant erection of a new genus. More recently the species has been considered a tailorbird *Orthotomus*[9,17], which has gained adherence within the conservation community[4], but *Birds of Africa* places it in *Artisornis*. While it shares a number of morphological features with Asian tailorbirds[9], it is not known whether it also builds a distinctively sewn nest of leaves like that of other *Orthotomus*. To this confusion, we add our discovery that the individuals at Amani possess long filoplumes (Figs 1–2), a feature that has not been previously noted[1,9,11,12,17]. Thus controversy surrounding its generic placement appears set to continue.

Conservation status

Amani Nature Reserve was established in 1997 to provide greater protection to this biodiversity hotspot. Such status will enhance the survival possibilities for rarer animals and birds, including *moreaui*, which is widespread in the reserve. Our work has demonstrated that the species' population is not as low as feared and that it is also more widespread than previously believed. Even if this encouraging news is solely due to more thorough field work than has previously been conducted, the existence of this population is a positive development.

Nonetheless, there is still a pressing need to assess the species' distribution and numbers within the rest of the nature reserve and in surrounding forest at suitable elevations. A short detailed ecological study on territory sizes, foraging ecology and behaviour is planned for the future. It is envisaged that details of its habitat specificity will be obtained to gain a better understanding of how to manage for the species in the East Usambaras. We also plan to establish whether forest-edge habitats adjacent to wetlands are preferred over drier areas.

Many years elapsed without any sightings of this skulking bird in the East Usambara Mountains, and it has not been reported from other Eastern Arc mountains that possibly hold suitable habitat. We consider that there is a strong possibility of finding it in the Udzungwa Mountains, particularly in more level areas at similar altitudes.

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To download a copy of the relevant East Usambara Conservation Area Programme report (No. 47), please refer to the internet site www.usambara.com. At this site one can also find an updated list of 342 birds of the East Usambara Mountains. A checklist of the East Usambara avifauna is available for sale at the Amani Nature Reserve Visitor's Centre in Sigi.

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Ornithological notes from a primate survey in Eritrea

Dietmar Zinner

L'article présente des observations ornithologiques, faites en Eritrée centrale entre 1997 et 2000, à l'occasion de dénombrements de primates. Sur les 540 espèces d'oiseaux connues du pays, 267 (49,4%) ont été observées, y compris sept des 13 endémiques régionaux. Deux espèces introduites récemment, le Moineau domestique *Passer domesticus* et le Corbeau familier *Corvus splendens*, ont été notées dans plusieurs localités. Deux espèces observées sont considérées comme globalement 'Vulnérables' d'après la Liste Rouge de BirdLife International[17]: l'Aigle criard *Aquila clanga* et le Faucon crécerellette *Falco naumanni*.

Introduction

Recent information concerning the composition and distribution of flora and fauna in Eritrea is remarkably sparse. Long periods of civil war in the last decades have made the region almost inaccessible and biogeographic work very difficult or impossible. Therefore, most information on species status is outdated and incomplete. In 1991, Eritrea became independent and the Ministry of Agriculture and Department of Environment commenced preparation of a national biodiversity assessment[3]. To overcome the serious data deficiency, a series of wildlife surveys was initiated. I undertook several surveys focusing on primate abundance and distribution, especially of Hamadryas Baboons *Papio hamadryas*, which was also designed to determine ecological and human factors influencing their distribution in central Eritrea[22–24]. During the survey, I also made notes on birds whenever possible. Here, I present these as one of the first attempts to update Eritrean ornithology.

Eritrea has long been recognised as being on an important migration route and a stopover for many Palearctic migrants[4–5]. For other species Eritrea is of particular significance, due to its geography and habitat diversity[2]. However, little work has been conducted since Smith[15], which is still the most current detailed compilation of species recorded in the country.

Smith[15] listed 528 species for Eritrea with 24 additional species requiring confirmation. Due to taxonomic revisions, 11 species were omitted from his main list. Based on this, Dowsett & Dowsett-Lemaire[4] listed 543 species for Eritrea, of which 306 are resident (50% or 153 with proof of breeding) and 208 regular seasonal migrants (160 from the Palearctic), and including six species that had previously required proof, but rejected another (Northern Masked Weaver *Ploceus taeniopterus*) and questioned a further five. Kasparek[10] added three species, Maccoa Duck *Oxyura maccoa*, Yellow-legged Gull *Larus (argentatus) cachinnans* and Sooty Tern *Sterna fuscata*. Urban & Brown[18] and the distribution maps in *The Birds of Africa*[1,7,8,11,19,20] suggest that up to 30 species, not officially recorded in the country may also occur.

Geography and climate

Eritrea is within the Horn of Africa, bordered by the Red Sea in the east, Sudan in the north and west and Ethiopia and Djibouti to the south. It covers 120,000 km^2 and has a human population of c3.5 million. Mean altitude is approximately 790 m,. with the lowest point in the Dankalia depression (-110 m) and the highest in the south-eastern escarpment, the Amba Soira (3,020 m). Annual precipitation is between 50 mm and 1,000 mm, with a rainy season in June–October in the highlands and western lowlands, and another short wet season on the coast in December–February. Annual rainfall and plant productivity varies in relation to altitude and distance from the coast, thus Eritrea may be divided into five major ecogeographical zones. From east to west. these are the coastal lowlands that reach up to 40 km inland, including the region of Dankalia. an inhospitable volcanic extension of the lowlands that experiences low rainfall and extremely high temperatures. This gives way to the eastern escarpment. and a sudden rise to 3,000 m, which extends north into the arid highlands and south to the moist highlands, including the Hamasien plateau and catchment areas of the Anseba and Mareb rivers. The moist highlands are the main areas of human settlement and agriculture in Eritrea. The western escarpment drops steeply to 1,000 m into the north-west arid lowlands and south-west moist lowlands. decreasing to 200–500 m at the Sudanese border.

Methods

Surveys were conducted in October–November 1997, March–April and September–October 1998. Additionally, I visited some areas in June 1999 and February 2000. Much of Eritrea is very mountainous and rugged, with deep valleys. Some areas are still mined following the war for independence; there are few roads and large areas are accessible only on foot. My surveys concentrated on the centre of the country and I did not visit Dankalia, any offshore islands or most of the western lowlands, particularly the north-west. When possible, I made notes on the avifauna at my study sites. All observations are sight records and were made with binoculars and, occasionally, a telescope. Identifications were based on van Perlo[12].

Ecogeographical zones

Eritrea encompasses several different habitats including semi-desert, dry seasonal grassland, arid and semi-arid bush and woodland, evergreen moist forest, Afromontane forest, inland and coastal wetlands and islands[6,9,13,14,21]. For the purposes of this study, I recognised 12 ecogeographical zones based on altitude, annual precipitation and dominant habitat (Fig. 1, Table 1).

Results and discussion

During my surveys, I identified 267 bird species (49.4%) of those listed for Eritrea (Appendix 1). Some identifications were impossible because of sub-optimal observation conditions, eg female harriers, most probably *Circus pygargus* or *C. macrourus*, which I saw several times on the central plateau and in the Mareb River catchment, a nightjar *Caprimulgus* sp., which I saw only briefly from a car, several swifts and swallows and others indicated in Appendix 1.

Of interest are my records of Maccoa Duck and Ring-necked Dove *Streptopelia capicola*, both of which have not been mentioned in specific lists for Eritrea[4,5,15], but were mapped for the country by Snow[16]. Also two 'introduced' species occur very locally in Eritrea, Indian House Crow *Corvus splendens* in Massawa and Hirghigo and House Sparrow *Passer domesticus* in Keren, Akordad and Barentu, but not

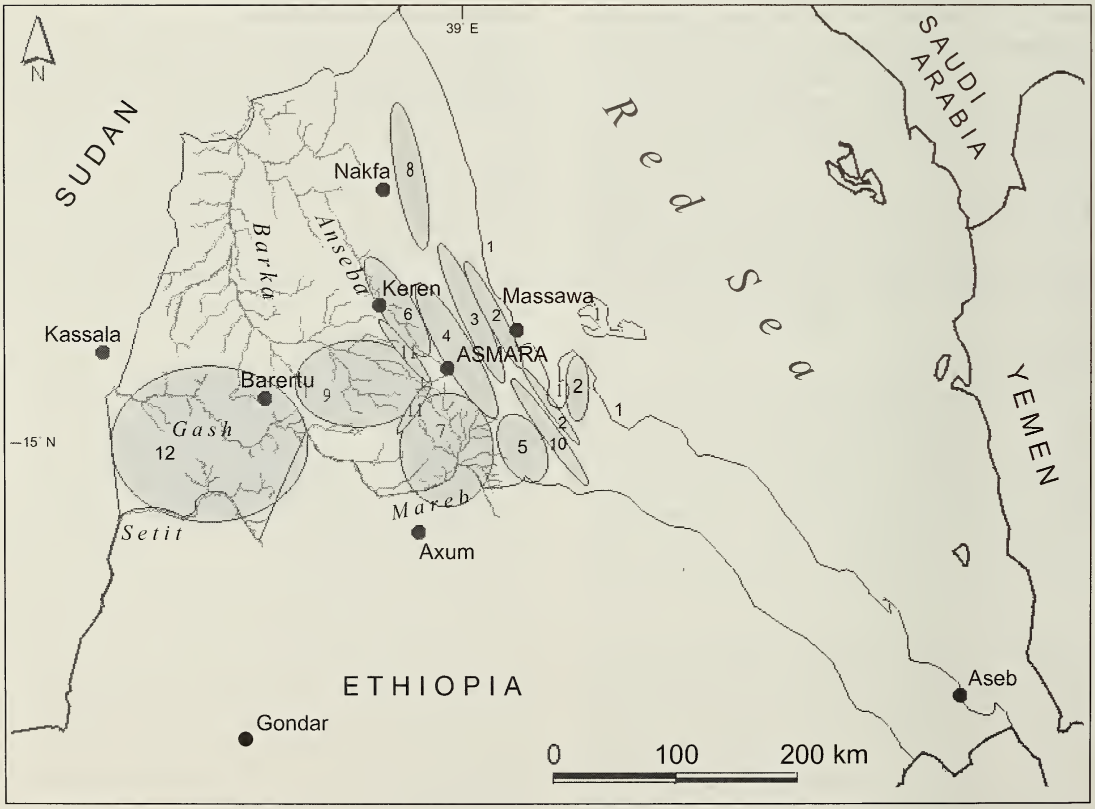

Figure 1. Approximate position and extent of ecogeographical zones in Eritrea (1 = coast, islands, sea; 2 = coastal lowland; 3 = central-eastern escarpment; 4 = central plateau; 5 = southern plateau; 6 = Anseba River catchment; 7 = Mareb River catchment; 8 = north-eastern escarpment; 9 = Barka River catchment; 10 = south-eastern escarpment; 11 = south-western escarpment; 12 = south-western lowlands).

Table 1. Ecogeographical zones

code	zone	altitude (m)	precipitation (mm/year)	main habitat types
1	coast, islands, sea	0–50	< 300	coastal waters, beach, dunes, mangroves, tidal flats
2	coastal lowland	-110–400	< 300	semi-desert, barren soil, *Acacia* shrubland, dry grassland, riverine open woodland (very degraded)
3	central eastern escarpment	400–2,600	400–1,000	closed forest to open woodland, evergreen to deciduous dry, bushland, seasonal grassland
4	central plateau	2,200–2,600	400–700	agriculture, degraded highland forest (*Juniperus*), seasonal grassland, shrubland, dams, *Eucalyptus* stands
5	southern plateau	2,000–2,600	400–700	agriculture, seasonal grassland and marshes, shrubland, dams, *Eucalyptus* stands
6	Anseba River catchment	1,100–2,000	300–700	agriculture, riverine woodland, *Euphorbia* woodland, shrubland
7	Mareb River catchment	1,400–2,000	500–700	agriculture, *Acacia* open and closed woodland, riverine woodland, shrubland
8	north-eastern escarpment	400–2,300	200–500	deciduous dry woodland, barren soil, bush and shrubland
9	Barka River catchment	800–1,200	300–700	*Euphorbia* and *Acacia* open woodland, riverine woodland, bush and shrubland, agriculture
10	south-eastern escarpment	400–3,020	300–700	closed forest to open woodland, evergreen to deciduous dry highland forest (*Juniperus*), bushland, seasonal grassland and marshes
11	south-western escarpment	1,200–2,300	500–700	*Acacia* and *Euphorbia* open woodland, deciduous dry woodland, bush and shrubland
12	south-western lowland	550–1,000	500–900	*Acacia* open bush and woodland, deciduous woodland, seasonal grassland, *Hyphaene* riverine forests, *Baobab*

in Asmera. Of the 13 regional endemics I found seven: Wattled Ibis *Bostrychia carunculata*, White-collared Pigeon *Columba albitorques*, Black-winged Lovebird *Agapornis taranta*, Abyssinian Woodpecker *Dendropicos abyssinicus*, Rüppell's Black Chat *Myrmecocichla melaena*, White-winged Cliff-Chat *Myrmecocichla semirufa* and White-billed Starling *Onychognathus albirostris*, but failed to record Rouget's Rail *Rougetius rougetii*, Banded Barbet *Lybius undatus*, Abyssinian Slaty-Flycatcher *Melaenornis chocolatinus*, White-backed Black Tit *Parus leuconotus*, Abyssinian Black-headed Oriole *Oriolus monacha* and Thick-billed Raven *Corvus crassirostris*. According to *Threatened Birds of the World*[17], 15 Eritrean bird species are of special conservation concern, of which I recorded three, Greater Spotted Eagle *Aquila clanga*, Lesser Kestrel *Falco naumanni* (both Vulnerable and Cinereous Bunting *Emberiza cineracea* (Near Threatened).

I almost certainly failed to identify many passerines, while the spatial and temporal pattern of my surveys meant that I did not visit any offshore islands, large parts of Dankalia and the north and west of the country, and thus did not record many localised species. I was unable to gather data on the large concentrations of breeding and wintering seabirds on the Dahlak Archipelago. I did not visit Eritrea during the summer rainy season and most of the intra-African migrants that occur in Eritrea at this season were therefore missed.

It is possible that some species have become rarer during the last 50 years. Smith[15] for example reported large numbers of vultures in Eritrea, however, I observed very few. Probably the overall decrease in wildlife has led to a decrease in these scavengers.

Eritrea appears to be still an important region for wintering and passing migrants. Though there are few counts for any species, many references refer to the movement of migrants along the eastern escarpment slopes of the central plateau and along the coast, offshore islands and sea channel between the two, eg Barn Swallow *Hirundo rustica*: 'passage in huge numbers', European Sand Martin *Riparia riparia*: 'abundant on passage', and Yellow Wagtail *Motacilla flava*: 'very large numbers'[15]. I also saw more than 60 Common Buzzards *Buteo buteo* and more than 100 European Bee-eaters *Merops apiaster* passing within one hour, and more than 50 Common Redstarts *Phoenicurus phoenicurus* within two hours, hundreds of Yellow Wagtails passing north through the coastal lowlands and White Wagtails *Motacilla alba* on the plateau.

Eritrea, though a relatively small country, has a broad diversity of habitats and extremes of altitude and climate that combine to produce a correspondingly large species diversity, not only in birds. Currently, the government is developing an entirely new conservation infrastructure and protected areas system. However, ongoing conflicts in the region mean that progress is very slow and other activities take precedence over conservation.

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Appendix 1. List of species recorded in Eritrea during the primate surveys.

Each species is listed together with the following information: scientific name and common name; status according to Smith 1957[15]; and Dowsett & Dowsett-Lemaire[4] (r = resident, rb = with definite breeding record, m = intra-African migrant, mb = with definite breeding record, p = Palearctic migrant, p+ = a substantial proportion of those on passage also winter in Eritrea, v = vagrant (normally with five records or fewer), ib = introduced species now established with definite breeding record, e = endemic to Ethiopia and Eritrea). The second paragraph presents the author's data: rec = number of records; sites = number of sites of records; # zones = number of ecogeographical zones; zones = identification code of zones; month = month of record; altitude = given in m, while mm = males, ff = females. An optional third paragraph is devoted to comments.

Struthio camelus Ostrich; status: rare; rb
rec: 1; sites: 1; # zones: 1; zones: 2; month: 10; altitude: 10–400
comments: single individual

Tachybaptus ruficollis Little Grebe; status: locally common; rb
rec: 13; sites: 7; # zones: 4; zones: 2, 4, 5, 6; month: 2, 3, 4, 6, 10, 11; altitude: 180–2,400
comments: one group of 30 and another of 25 birds at dam

Sula leucogaster Brown Booby; status: common; rb
rec: 3; sites: 2; # zones: 1; zones: 1; month: 2, 4; altitude: 0

Phalacrocorax africanus Long-tailed Cormorant; status: rare; m
rec: 2; sites: 2; # zones: 2; zones: 4, 6; month: 2, 6; altitude: 2,200–2,300
comments: immatures?

Pelecanus rufescens Pink-backed Pelican; status: fairly common; rb
rec: 13; sites: 8; # zones: 6; zones: 1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 7; month: 2, 4, 6, 10, 11; altitude: 0–2,400
comments: 1–12 birds

Ardeola ralloides Squacco Heron; status: rare; p
rec: 1; sites: 1; # zones: 1; zones: 2; month: 10; altitude: 150

Bubulcus ibis Cattle Egret; status: fairly common; rb/m
rec: 6; sites: 6; # zones: 3; zones: 2, 4, 9; month: 6, 10, 11; altitude: 150–2,400

Lappet-faced Vulture *Torgos tracheliotos*
by Mark Andrews

Butorides striatus Green-backed Heron; status: common; rb
rec: 2; sites: 2; # zones: 2; zones: 1, 7; month: 4, 10; altitude: 5–1,650

Egretta garzetta Little Egret; status: fairly common; p
rec: 8; sites: 5; # zones: 4; zones: 1, 2, 4, 6; month: 2, 3, 4, 10; altitude: 5–2,300

Egretta gularis Western Reef Heron; status: common; rb
rec: 4; sites: 2; # zones: 1; zones: 1; month: 4, 6, 10; altitude: 0
comments: dark morph

Ardea purpurea Purple Heron; status: rare; p
rec: 3; sites: 3; # zones: 3; zones: 2, 6, 9; month: 10; altitude: 180–2,100

Ardea cinerea Grey Heron; status: fairly common; p
rec: 16; sites: 9; # zones: 6; zones: 1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 7; month: 2, 3, 4, 6, 10, 11; altitude: 5–2,400

Ardea melanocephala Black-headed Heron; status: locally common; r
rec: 5; sites: 5; # zones: 5; zones: 1, 2, 4, 6, 7; month: 2, 4, 6, 10; altitude: 5–2,300
comments: roost tree in Asmera

Scopus umbretta Hamerkop; status: fairly common; rb
rec: 14; sites: 8; # zones: 5; zones: 2, 3, 4, 6, 7; month: 3, 4, 6, 10, 11; altitude: 180–2,400
comments: nests at several sites, mainly in riverine woodland

Mycteria ibis Yellow-billed Stork; status: rare; r
rec: 1; sites: 1; # zones: 1; zones: 4; month: 6; altitude: 2400
comments: an immature at dam near Asmera

Ciconia nigra Black Stork; status: rare; p
rec: 2; sites: 2; # zones: 2; zones: 2, 7; month: 10, 11; altitude: 180–1,750
comments: one and 13 individuals

Ciconia abdimii Abdim's Stork; status: common; mb
rec: 18; sites: 9; # zones: 6; zones: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6; month: 2, 3, 4, 6, 10, 11; altitude: 50–2,400
comments: br, young in nest in Asmera, March–June

Threskiornis aethiopica Sacred Ibis; status: locally common; r
rec: 7; sites: 5; # zones: 5; zones: 1, 4, 6, 8, 9; month: 4, 6, 10; altitude: 0–2,300
comments: roosting trees in Keren and Asmera, br record by Kasparek[10]

Plegadis falcinellus Glossy Ibis; status: rare; p
rec: 1; sites: 1; # zones: 1; zones: 2; month: 10; altitude: 180
comments: six at dam

Bostrychia carunculata Wattled Ibis; status: locally common; r, e
rec: 4; sites: 3; # zones: 2; zones: 4, 5; month: 2, 4, 10; altitude: 2,250–2,370
comments: eight and 15 at roost site east of Asmera, six and 12 near Senafe

Platalea leucorodia Eurasian Spoonbill; status: locally common; rb
rec: 2; sites: 2; # zones: 2; zones: 1, 7; month: 6; altitude: 0–1,950
comments: one and 10 birds

Phoenicopterus ruber Greater Flamingo; status: locally common; p
rec: 3; sites: 2; # zones: 2; zones: 1, 4; month: 2, 4, 10; altitude: 0–2,400
comments: three and seven birds at coast, three immatures at dam in highlands

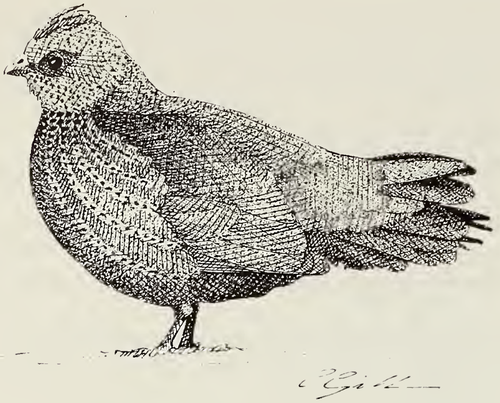
Alopochen aegyptiacus Egyptian Goose; status: common; rb
rec: 18; sites: 9; # zones: 2; zones: 2, 4; month: 2, 3, 4, 6, 10, 11; altitude: 180–2,400
comments: br, several times with chicks

Anas penelope Eurasian Wigeon; 51; G01-1205; status: rare; p
rec: 1; sites: 1; # zones: 1; zones: 4; month: 2; altitude: 2,400

Anas acuta Northern Pintail; status: fairly common; p
rec: 2; sites: 2; # zones: 2; zones: 2, 4; month: 2, 10; altitude: 180–2,400

Anas clypeata Northern Shoveler; status: locally common; p
rec: 8; sites: 3; # zones: 2; zones: 2, 4; month: 2, 3, 10, 11; altitude: 180–2,400

Aythya fuligula Tufted Duck; status: rare; p
rec: 2; sites: 1; # zones: 1; zones: 4; month: 2; altitude: 2,200–2,400
comments: more than 20 + ff



Stone Partridge *Ptilopachus petrosus*
by Chris Gibbins

Oxyura maccoa Maccoa Duck; status: ?
rec: 2; sites: 1; # zones: 1; zones: 4; month: 2, 6; altitude: 2,200–2,400
comments: twice a single male; not listed by Smith[15] or Dowsett & Dowsett-Lemaire[5], but see Kasparek[10]

Elanus caeruleus Black-shouldered Kite; status: rare; r
rec: 4; sites: 4; # zones: 3; zones: 2, 4, 7; month: 4, 10; altitude: 50–2,300

Milvus migrans Black Kite; status: abundent; mb/p
rec: 28; sites: 13; # zones: 8; zones: 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 9, 11; month: 2, 3, 4, 6, 10, 11; altitude: 0–2,400
comments: roosts in Asmera with >150 individuals

Gypaetus barbatus Lammergeier; status: rare; r
rec: 1; sites: 1; # zones: 1; zones: 7; month: 11; altitude: 1,750
comments: a single

Gyps africanus African White-backed Vulture; status: locally common; r
rec: 1; sites: 1; # zones: 1; zones: 3; month: 10; altitude: 1,900
comments: one bird

Gyps rueppellii Rüppell's Vulture; status: common; r
rec: 3; sites: 3; # zones: 2; zones: 3, 7; month: 6, 10, 11; altitude: 1,650–1,950
comments: three individuals

Gyps fulvus European Griffon; status: rare; p
rec: 1; sites: 1; # zones: 1; zones: 10; month: 4; altitude: 2,730
comments: a single

Aegypius tracheliotos Lappet-faced Vulture; status: rare; r
rec: 1; sites: 1; # zones: 1; zones: 7; month: 3; altitude: 1,650
comments: a single

Circaetus gallicus Short-toed Snake Eagle; status: locally common; p
rec: 2; sites: 2; # zones: 2; zones: 2, 7; month: 10; altitude: 50–1,650

Circus pygargus Montagu's Harrier; status: common; p
rec: 4; sites: 3; # zones: 3; zones: 3, 4, 7; month: 3, 4, 10; altitude: 1,650–2,500
comments: only males identified

Circus sp. Pallid or Montagu's Harrier
rec: 7; sites: 5; # zones: 5; zones: 1, 3, 4, 7, 8; month: 2, 3, 4, 6, 10; altitude: 10–2,500
comments: females of probably both *Circus pygargus* and *C. macrourus* (Near-threatened)

Melierax metabates Dark Chanting Goshawk; status: common; rb
rec: 5; sites: 4; # zones: 2; zones: 2, 7; month: 3, 6, 10, 11; altitude: 50–1,950

Micronisus gabar Gabar Goshawk; status: common; rb
rec: 5; sites: 3; # zones: 2; zones: 7, 9; month: 3, 4, 10, 11; altitude: 1,000–1,750
comments: one dark morph

Accipiter badius Shikra; status: common; r
rec: 1; sites: 1; # zones: 1; zones: 7; month: 11; altitude: 1,600

Buteo buteo Common Buzzard; status: locally common; p
rec: 7; sites: 6; # zones: 5; zones: 3, 4, 5, 7, 11; month: 3, 4, 10, 11; altitude: 50–2,400
comments: >60 soaring in thermal, >50 passing in one hour

Buteo (*rufofuscus*) *augur* Augur Buzzard; status: common; r
rec: 13; sites: 7; # zones: 3; zones: 3, 4, 7; month: 2, 3, 4, 6, 10, 11; altitude: 1900–2400
comments: br, adults and immatures

Aquila clanga Greater Spotted Eagle; status: common; p
rec: 1; sites: 1; # zones: 1; zones: 3; month: 2; altitude: 2,300
comments: Vulnerable

Aquila (*rapax*) *rapax* Tawny Eagle; status: common; rb
rec: ?; sites: ?; # zones: ?; zones: ?; month: ?; altitude: ?
comments: probably among *A. nipalensis*

Aquila nipalensis Steppe Eagle; status: common; p
rec: 18; sites: 6; # zones: 3; zones: 3, 4, 7; month: 2, 3, 4, 6, 10, 11; altitude: 1,650–2,500
comments: up to 30 at rubbish dump, considered a subspecies of *A. rapax* by Urban & Brown[18]

Aquila verreauxii Verreaux's Eagle; status: rare; r
rec: 7; sites: 3; # zones: 2; zones: 3, 7; month: 3, 4, 10; altitude: 1,650–2,400
comments: br, March nest-defence, April breeding, Oct one chick in nest

Hieraaetus spilogaster African Hawk Eagle; status: rare; r
rec: 2; sites: 2; # zones: 2; zones: 9, 10; month: 2, 4; altitude: 750–2,000
comments: two (pair?) in flight

Lophaetus occipitalis Long-crested Eagle; status: common; rb
rec: 3; sites: 3; # zones: 2; zones: 4, 7; month: 3, 10, 11; altitude: 1,650–2,250

Polemaetus bellicosus Martial Eagle; status: rare; r
rec: 1; sites: 1; # zones: 1; zones: 2; month: 10; altitude: 100
comments: a single

Pandion haliaetus Osprey; status: locally common; rb/p
rec: 3; sites: 2; # zones: 1; zones: 1; month: 4, 10; altitude: 0–50
comments: hunting over coastal waters, three roosting on cliff

Falco naumanni Lesser Kestrel; status: abundant; p
rec: 3; sites: 2; # zones: 2; zones: 2, 4; month: 2, 4, 10; altitude: 50–2,400
comments: five at coast, 35–40 and >25 on central plateau, Vulnerable

Falco tinnunculus Common Kestrel; status: abundant; r/p
rec: 20; sites: 11; # zones: 5; zones: 2, 3, 4, 7, 10; month: 2, 3, 4, 10, 11; altitude: 50–2,730

Falco alopex Fox Kestrel; status: rare; r
rec: 1; sites: 1; # zones: 1; zones: 11; month: 4; altitude: 2,050
comments: a single

Falco subbuteo (Eurasian) Hobby; status: rare; p
rec: 1; sites: 1; # zones: 1; zones: 7; month: 4; altitude: 2,000
comments: single bird hunting swifts

Falco biarmicus Lanner Falcon; status: common; rb
rec: 8; sites: 5; # zones: 4; zones: 3, 4, 5, 7; month: 3, 4, 6, 10; altitude: 1,650–2,400
comments: often pairs, one immature

Falco peregrinus Peregrine Falcon; status: fairly common; p
rec: 3; sites: 2; # zones: 2; zones: 4, 7; month: 3, 10, 11; altitude: 1,750–2,300
comments: one hunting feral pigeons in Asmera, one in roost tree of Cattle Egrets in Asmera

Francolinus clappertoni Clapperton's Francolin; status: common; rb
rec: 1; sites: 1; # zones: 1; zones: 11; month: 4; altitude: 2,050

Francolinus erckelii Erckel's Francolin; status: common; rb
rec: 15; sites: 7; # zones: 3; zones: 3, 7, 10; month: 2, 3, 4, 5, 11; altitude: 1,650–2,500

Francolinus leucoscepus Yellow-necked Spurfowl; status: locally common; rb
rec: 2; sites: 1; # zones: 1; zones: 2; month: 4, 10; altitude: 50

Coturnix coturnix Common Quail; status: abundant; p
rec: 1; sites: 1; # zones: 1; zones: 3; month: 10; altitude: 2,200
comments: two (pair ?)

Ptilopachus petrosus Stone Partridge; status: rare; rb
rec: 2; sites: 1; # zones: 1; zones: 7; month: 3, 4; altitude: 1,650

Numida meleagris Helmeted Guineafowl; status: common; rb
rec: 11; sites: 7; # zones: 4; zones: 2, 3, 7, 9; month: 2, 3, 4, 6, 10, 11; altitude: 50–2,000

Gallinula chloropus Common Moorhen; status: rare; r
rec: 4; sites: 1; # zones: 1; zones: 4; month: 2, 3, 10; altitude: 2,200–2,400

Fulica cristata Red-knobbed Coot; status: rare; rb
rec: 7; sites: 2; # zones: 2; zones: 4, 5; month: 2, 3, 4, 6, 10, 11; altitude: 2,200–2,400
comments: br, nest building

Ardeotis arabs Arabian Bustard; status: locally common; rb
rec: 2; sites: 2; # zones: 2; zones: 2, 9; month: 2; altitude: 150–750

Haematopus ostralegus Eurasian Oystercatcher; status: locally common; p+
rec: 1; sites: 1; # zones: 1; zones: 1; month: 4; altitude: 0

Himantopus himantopus Black-winged Stilt; status: locally common; p
rec: 10; sites: 4; # zones: 3; zones: 2, 4, 7; month: 2, 3, 4, 6, 10, 11; altitude: 180–2,400

Recurvirostra avosetta Eurasian Avocet; status: rare; v
rec: 1; sites: 1; # zones: 1; zones: 4; month: 2; altitude: 2,400
comments: 20 individuals

Dromas ardeola Crab Plover; 179; status: locally common; r
rec: 1; sites: 1; # zones: 1; zones: 1; month: 4; altitude: 0

Burhinus oedicnemus Eurasian Thick-knee; status: rare; p
rec: 2; sites: 1; # zones: 1; zones: 2; month: 6, 10; altitude: 180

Burhinus capensis Spotted Thick-knee; status: rare; r
rec: 2; sites: 1; # zones: 1; zones: 7; month: 10; altitude: 1,650

Glareola pratincola Common Pratincole; status: fairly common; p
rec: 1; sites: 1; # zones: 1; zones: 2; month: 10; altitude: 180

Charadrius dubius Little Ringed Plover; status: locally common; p
rec: 1; sites: 1; # zones: 1; zones: 4; month: 10; altitude: 2,400

Charadrius hiaticula Ringed Plover; status: common; p+
rec: 2; sites: 2; # zones: 2; zones: 2, 4; month: 4, 10; altitude: 50–2,400

Charadrius tricollaris Three-banded Plover; status: rare; r
rec: 11; sites: 5; # zones: 4; zones: 1, 2, 4, 7; month: 2, 3, 6, 10, 11; altitude: 0–2,400

Pluvialis squatarola Grey Plover; status: common; p+
rec: 1; sites: 1; # zones: 1; zones: 1; month: 4; altitude: 0

Vanellus tectus Black-headed Lapwing; status: locally common; rb
rec: 7; sites: 2; # zones: 2; zones: 7, 9; month: 2, 3, 10; altitude: 750–1,650

Vanellus spinosus Spur-winged Lapwing; status: locally common; r
rec: 6; sites: 4; # zones: 3; zones: 2, 6, 7; month: 2, 6, 10; altitude: 150–1,950

Vanellus melanopterus Black-winged Lapwing; status: rare; rb
rec: 1; sites: 1; # zones: 1; zones: 4; month: 6; altitude: 2,500
comments: three birds

Numenius phaeopus Whimbrel; status: common; p+
rec: 2; sites: 2; # zones: 1; zones: 1; month: 4; altitude: 0

Numenius arquata Eurasian Curlew; status: common; p+
rec: 1; sites: 1; # zones: 1; zones: 1; month: 4; altitude: 0

Tringa erythropus Spotted Redshank; status: rare; p
rec: 1; sites: 1; # zones: 1; zones: 4; month: 11; altitude: 2,400

Tringa totanus Redshank; status: common; p+
rec: 4; sites: 2; # zones: 2; zones: 1, 4; month: 3, 4, 10, 11; altitude: 0–2,400

Tringa stagnatilis Marsh Sandpiper; status: fairly common; p
rec: 1; sites: 1; # zones: 1; zones: 4; month: 10; altitude: 2,400

Tringa nebularia Greenshank; status: fairly common; p
rec: 2; sites: 1; # zones: 1; zones: 4; month: 2, 3; altitude: 2,200

Tringa ochropus Green Sandpiper; status: locally common; p
rec: 4; sites: 3; # zones: 2; zones: 4, 7; month: 3, 11; altitude: 1,650–2,200

Tringa glareola Wood Sandpiper; status: fairly common; p
rec: 1; sites: 1; # zones: 1; zones: 6; month: 10; altitude: 2,100

Actitis hypoleucos Common Sandpiper; status: locally common; p
rec: 7; sites: 3; # zones: 3; zones: 2, 4, 7; month: 2, 3, 10, 11; altitude: 180–2,400

Calidris minuta Little Stint; status: common; p
rec: 2; sites: 1; # zones: 1; zones: 4; month: 3, 10; altitude: 2200–2400

Philomachus pugnax Ruff; status: common; p
rec: 3; sites: 2; # zones: 2; zones: 1, 4; month: 6, 10, 11; altitude: 0–2400

Larus hemprichii Sooty Gull; status: fairly common; rb
rec: 4; sites: 3; # zones: 1; zones: 1; month: 4, 6, 10; altitude: 0

Larus fuscus Lesser Black-backed Gull; status: abundant; p+
rec: 4; sites: 2; # zones: 1; zones: 1; month: 4, 6, 10; altitude: 0

Larus ridibundus Black-headed Gull; status: abundant; p+
rec: 2; sites: 1; # zones: 1; zones: 4; month: 2, 10; altitude: 2,400

Gelochelidon nilotica Gull-billed Tern; status: fairly common; p+
rec: 1; sites: 1; # zones: 1; zones: 4; month: 6; altitude: 2,400

Sterna caspia Caspian Tern; status: fairly common; p
rec: 2; sites: 2; # zones: 1; zones: 1; month: 6, 10; altitude: 0

Sterna bengalensis Lesser Crested Tern; status: abundant; rb
rec: 2; sites: 1; # zones: 1; zones: 1; month: 4, 6; altitude: 0

Sterna repressa White-cheeked Tern; status: abundant; rb
rec: 1; sites: 1; # zones: 1; zones: 1; month: 6; altitude: 0

Chlidonias leucopterus White-winged Black Tern; status: common; p
rec: 1; sites: 1; # zones: 1; zones: 2; month: 10; altitude: 180

Pterocles exustus Chestnut-bellied Sandgrouse; status: common; rb
rec: 4; sites: 4; # zones: 2; zones: 2, 9; month: 4, 6, 10; altitude: 50–1,000

Pterocles lichtensteinii Lichtenstein's Sandgrouse; status: rare; r
rec: 1; sites: 1; # zones: 1; zones: 2; month: 4; altitude: 50

Columba guinea Speckled Pigeon; status: abundant; rb
rec: 30; sites: 11; # zones: 7; zones: 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 11; month: 2, 3, 4, 6, 10, 11; altitude: 0–2,500

Columba albitorques White-collared Pigeon; status: locally common; r, e
rec: 1; sites: 1; # zones: 1; zones: 5; month: 4; altitude: 2,370

Streptopelia lugens Dusky Turtle Dove; status: abundant; r
rec: 9; sites: 6; # zones: 3; zones: 3, 4, 7; month: 2, 3, 6, 10, 11; altitude: 1,650–2,400

Streptopelia senegalensis Laughing Dove; status: common; rb
rec: 17; sites: 11; # zones: 6; zones: 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 8; month: 2, 3, 4, 6, 10, 11; altitude: 50–2,370

Streptopelia vinacea Vinaceous Dove; status: locally common; r
rec: 4; sites: 4; # zones: 3; zones: 3, 4, 7; month: 3, 4, 10; altitude: 950–2.200

Streptopelia capicola Ring-necked Dove; status: ?
rec: 2; sites: 2; # zones: 2; zones: 2, 7; month: 3, 4; altitude: 50–1,650
comments: not listed in Smith[15] or by Dowsett & Dowsett-Lemaire[4]

Streptopelia semitorquata Red-eyed Dove; status: common; rb
rec: 14; sites: 8; # zones: 5; zones: 3, 4, 7, 8, 10; month: 3, 4, 10, 11; altitude: 1,600–2,300

Turtur abyssinicus Black-billed Wood Dove; status: locally common; r
rec: 4; sites: 4; # zones: 3; zones: 2, 6, 7; month: 2, 4, 11; altitude: 180–1,750
comments: *T. afer* may have been overlooked

White-throated Bee-eater *Merops albicollis*
by Mark Andrews

Oena capensis Namaqua Dove; status: locally common; rb
rec: 13; sites: 10; # zones: 6; zones: 2, 4, 6, 7, 8, 9; month: 2, 3, 4, 6, 10, 11; altitude: 50–2,200

Treron waalia Bruce's Green Pigeon; status: locally common; rb
rec: 8; sites: 5; # zones: 4; zones: 3, 7, 8, 11; month: 2, 3, 4, 10, 11; altitude: 1,600–2,050

Poicephalus meyeri Meyer's (Brown) Parrot; status: locally common; r
rec: 8; sites: 5; # zones: 3; zones: 7, 8, 10; month: 2, 3, 4, 6, 10, 11; altitude: 1,200–2,000

Agapornis taranta Black-winged Lovebird; status: rare; r, e
rec: 1; sites: 1; # zones: 1; zones: 11; month: 4; altitude: ,050
comments: ten feeding on *Euphorbia*

Psittacula krameri Rose-ringed Parakeet; status: locally common; r
rec: 4; sites: 4; # zones: 3; zones: 6, 7, 9; month: 2, 4, 6, 11; altitude: 750–1,750

Tauraco leucotis White-cheeked Turaco; status: common; rb
rec: 8; sites: 3; # zones: 3; zones: 3, 5, 7; month: 2, 3, 4, 10, 11; altitude: 1,650–2,370

Crinifer zonurus Eastern Grey Plantain Eater; status: locally common; r
rec: 6; sites: 2; # zones: 2; zones: 7, 8; month: 2, 3, 4, 10; altitude: 1,650–1,950

Oxylophus levaillantii Levaillant's Cuckoo; status: rare; mb
rec: 1; sites: 1; # zones: 1; zones: 3; month: 11; altitude: 1,920

Tyto alba Barn Owl; status: rare; r
rec: 1; sites: 1; # zones: 1; zones: ; month: 4; altitude: 2,200

Bubo africanus Spotted Eagle Owl; status: fairly common; r
rec: 1; sites: 1; # zones: 1; zones: 5; month: 4; altitude: 2,370

Glaucidium perlatum Pearl-spotted Owlet; status: fairly common; r
rec: 1; sites: 1; # zones: 1; zones: 7; month: 3; altitude: 1,650

Athene noctua Little Owl; status: rare; r
rec: 1; sites: 1; # zones: 1; zones: 2; month: 4; altitude: 50

Caprimulgus sp. nightjar
rec: 1; sites: 1; # zones: 1; zones: 7; month: 10; altitude: 1,650
comments: unidentified to species

Cypsiurus parvus African Palm Swift; status: locally common; rb
rec: 6; sites: 5; # zones: 3; zones: 2, 6, 9; month: 2, 4, 6, 10; altitude: 50–1400

Tachymarptis melba Alpine Swift; status: fairly common; rb
rec: 2; sites: 2; # zones: 2; zones: 5, 7; month: 3, 4; altitude: 1,650–2,370

Tachymarptis aequatorialis Mottled Swift; status: abundant; m
rec: 2; sites: 2; # zones: 2; zones: 5, 6; month: 4; altitude: 1,400–2,370

Apus niansae Nyanza Swift; status: abundant; rb
rec: 1; sites: 1; # zones: 1; zones: 5; month: 4; altitude: 2,370
comments: probably included some *A. apus*

Apus apus Common Swift; status: common; p
rec: 1; sites: 1; # zones: 1; zones: 6; month: 4; altitude: 1,400
comments: probably included some *A. niansae*

Apus affinis Little Swift; status: abundant; rb
rec: 13; sites: 6; # zones: 4; zones: 2, 3, 4, 6; month: 2, 3, 4, 6, 10, 11; altitude: 180–2,500
comments: br, several colonies in Asmera

Apus caffer White-rumped Swift; status: fairly common; rb
rec: 1; sites: 1; # zones: 1; zones: 6; month: 4; altitude: 1,400

Colius striatus Speckled Mousebird; status: common; rb
rec: 13; sites: 8; # zones: 4; zones: 3, 4, 6, 7; month: 2, 3, 4, 6, 10, 11, altitude: 950–2,400

Urocolius macrourus Blue-naped Mousebird; status: locally common; rb
rec: 3; sites: 2; # zones: 2; zones: 3, 7; month: 2, 3, 10; altitude: 1,650–2,000

Halcyon chloris White-collared Kingfisher; status: locally common; rb
rec: 1; sites: 1; # zones: 1; zones: 1; month: 4; altitude: 0

Ceryle rudis Pied Kingfisher; status: locally common; r
rec: 2; sites: 2; # zones: 2; zones: 6, 7; month: 2, 11; altitude: 1,550–1,750

Merops pusillus Little Bee-eater; status: rare; rb
rec: 3; sites: 3; # zones: 3; zones: 2, 7, 11; month: 4, 6, 11; altitude: 180–2,050

Merops variegatus Blue-breasted Bee-eater; status: fairly common; rb
rec: 5; sites: 5; # zones: 4; zones: 2, 3, 7, 8; month: 4, 6, 10; altitude: 50–2,000

Merops albicollis White-throated Bee-eater; status: fairly common; mb
rec: 3; sites: 3; # zones: 2; zones: 2, 6; month: 4, 6; altitude: 50–1,200

Merops orientalis Little Green Bee-eater; status: rare; rb
rec: 6; sites: 6; # zones: 2; zones: 2, 9; month: 2, 4, 10; altitude: 50–750

Merops apiaster Eurasian Bee-eater; status: locally common; p
rec: 9; sites: 6; # zones: 5; zones: 2, 3, 8, 10, 11; month: 4, 10; altitude: 50–2400
comments: >100 individuals passing in one hour

Merops nubicus (Northern) Carmine Bee-eater; status: locally common; mb
rec: 1; sites: 1; # zones: 1; zones: 2; month: 10; altitude: 50
comments: ten individuals

Coracias garrulus European Roller; status: fairly common; p
rec: 2; sites: 2; # zones: 1; zones: 4; month: 10; altitude: 2,200

Coracias abyssinica Abyssinian Roller; status: common; rb
rec: 8; sites: 7; # zones: 5; zones: 2, 6, 7, 8, 9; month: 2, 4, 6, 10, 11; altitude: 180–1,950

Coracias naevia Rufous-crowned Roller; status: fairly common; rb
rec: 2; sites: 1; # zones: 1; zones: 7; month: 3; altitude: 1,650

Phoeniculus somaliensis Black-billed Wood-Hoopoe; status: common; rb
rec: 7; sites: 4; # zones: 3; zones: 3, 7, 8; month: 2, 3, 4, 10, 11; altitude: 1,650–2,000

Phoeniculus aterrimus Black (Wood-Hoopoe) Scimitarbill; status: fairly common; rb
rec: 2; sites: 2; # zones: 1; zones: 7; month: 10, 11; altitude: 1,650–1,750

Upupa epops Hoopoe; status: common; rb/p
rec: 18; sites: 11; # zones: 5; zones: 2, 3, 4, 5, 7; month: 2, 3, 4, 6, 10, 11; altitude: 50–2,370
comments: probably refer to *africana*

Tockus hemprichii Hemprich's Hornbill; status: locally common; r
rec: 4; sites: 4; # zones: 2; zones: 3, 7; month: 3, 11; altitude: 1,650–2,150

Tockus erythrorhynchus Red-billed Hornbill; status: common; r
rec: 15; sites: 9; # zones: 5; zones: 2, 3, 7, 8, 9; month: 2, 3, 4, 6, 10, 11; altitude: 50–2,000

Tockus nasutus African Grey Hornbill; status: common; rb
rec: 4; sites: 4; # zones: 3; zones: 3, 6, 8; month: 2, 4, 10; altitude: 950–1,950

Ceratogymna brevis Silvery-cheeked Hornbill; status: accid; v
rec: 1; sites: 1; # zones: 1; zones: 7; month: 6; altitude: 1,750
comments: two (pair?) in flight

Bucorvus abyssinicus Abyssinian Ground Hornbill; status: rare; rb
rec: 1; sites: 1; # zones: 1; zones: 7; month: 11; altitude: 1,750

Pogoniulus pusillus Red-fronted Tinkerbird; status: fairly common; r
rec: 3; sites: 2; # zones: 2; zones: 7, 8; month: 3, 4, 10; altitude: 1,650–1,950

Lybius guifsobalito Black-billed Barbet; status: locally common; r
rec: 6; sites: 3; # zones: 2; zones: 7, 8; month: 3, 4, 10, 11; altitude: 1,650–1,950

Trachyphonus margaritatus Yellow-breasted Barbet; status: rare; rb
rec: 9; sites: 6; # zones: 5; zones: 2, 3, 7, 8, 11; month: 3, 4, 6, 10; altitude: 150–2,400

Campethera nubica Nubian Woodpecker; status: common; r
rec: 3; sites: 3; # zones: 2; zones: 3, 7; month: 3, 11; altitude: 1,600–1,920

Dendropicos abyssinicus Abyssinian Woodpecker; status: rare; rb, e
rec: 2; sites: 2; # zones: 2; zones: 7, 10; month: 4, 11; altitude: 1,750–2,000

Alaemon alaudipes Hoopoe Lark; status: rare; r
rec: 1; sites: 1; # zones: 1; zones: 2; month: 6; altitude: 10

Calandrella cinerea (incl. *blanfordi*) Red-capped Lark; status: abundant; rb
rec: 2; sites: 1; # zones: 1; zones: 4; month: 4, 10; altitude: 2,500
comments: treated as two species in Smith[15]

Galerida cristata Crested Lark; status: rare; rb
rec: 5; sites: 3; # zones: 1; zones: 2; month: 2, 4, 6, 10; altitude: 10–150
comments: probably included some *G. theklae*

Galerida malabarica Thekla Lark; status: common; rb
rec: 6; sites: 3; # zones: 3; zones: 4, 5, 7; month: 2, 3, 4, 6, 10; altitude: 1,650–2,500
comments: probably included some *G. cristata*

Eremopterix leucotis Chestnut-backed Sparrow Lark; status: locally common; r
rec: 3; sites: 3; # zones: 3; zones: 3, 7, 9; month: 3, 10, 11; altitude: 650–2,400

Eremopterix nigriceps Black-crowned Sparrow Lark; status: abundant; rb
rec: 5; sites: 4; # zones: 2; zones: 2, 9; month: 4, 6, 10; altitude: 10–650

Hirundo abyssinica Lesser Striped Swallow; status: common; rb
rec: 1; sites: 1; # zones: 1; zones: 10; month: 4; altitude: 2,000

Hirundo daurica Red-rumped Swallow; status: locally common; rb/p
rec: 2; sites: 2; # zones: 2; zones: 3, 10; month: 4; altitude: 2,000–2,400

Hirundo fuligula (incl. *obsoleta*) Rock Martin; status: common; rb
rec: 14; sites: 5; # zones: 4; zones: 3, 4, 5, 7; month: 3, 4, 6, 10, 11; altitude: 1,650–2,400
comments: br, nest in April

Hirundo aethiopica Ethiopian Swallow; status: common; rb
rec: 7; sites: 6; # zones: 5; zones: 2, 4, 5, 7, 10; month: 3, 4, 6; altitude: 180–2,370

Hirundo rustica Barn Swallow; status: locally common; p
rec: 4; sites: 4; # zones: 3; zones: 2, 4, 10; month: 4, 10; altitude: 50–2,400

Delichon urbica Common House Martin; status: common; p
rec: 1; sites: 1; # zones: 1; zones: 3; month: 3; altitude: 2,400

Motacilla flava Yellow Wagtail; status: abundant; p
rec: 11; sites: 6; # zones: 5; zones: 2, 3, 4, 7, 10; month: 2, 3, 4, 10, 11; altitude: 50–2,500
comments: Feb migration in coastal lowlands

Silvery-cheeked Hornbill *Ceratogymna brevis*
by Mark Andrews

Motacilla cinerea Grey Wagtail; status: fairly common; p
rec: 2; sites: 2; # zones: 2; zones: 4, 7; month: 10; altitude: 1,650–2,200

Motacilla alba White Wagtail; status: common; p
rec: 9; sites: 4; # zones: 3; zones: 2, 4, 7; month: 2, 3, 6, 10, 11; altitude: 180–2,400
comments: Feb migration in highlands

Motacilla aguimp African Pied Wagtail; status: locally common; r
rec: 1; sites: 1; # zones: 1; zones: 7; month: 10; altitude: 1,650

Anthus novaeseelandiae Richard's Pipit; status: locally common; rb
rec: 3; sites: 2; # zones: 2; zones: 3, 4; month: 4, 10; altitude: 1,900–2,500

Anthus campestris Tawny Pipit; status: abundant; p+
rec: 2; sites: 1; # zones: 1; zones: 4; month: 6, 10; altitude: 2,400–2,500

Anthus similis Long-billed Pipit; status: fairly common; r
rec: 1; sites: 1; # zones: 1; zones: 4; month: 6; altitude: 2,400

Pycnonotus barbatus Common Bulbul; status: common; rb
rec: 25; sites: 14; # zones: 6; zones: 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7; month: 2, 3, 4, 6, 10, 11; altitude: 50–2,400

Monticola solitarius Blue Rock Thrush; status: common; p+
rec: 3; sites: 2; # zones: 1; zones: 3; month: 2, 10; altitude: 2,000–2,150

Monticola saxatilis Rock Thrush; status: fairly common; p+
rec: 5; sites: 5; # zones: 2; zones: 3, 4; month: 3, 10; altitude: 2,000–2,400

Monticola rufocinereus Little Rock Thrush; status: fairly common; rb
rec: 6; sites: 4; # zones: 2; zones: 3, 7; month: 2, 4, 10; altitude: 1,650–2,200
comments: br, nest in April

Turdus olivaceus Olive Thrush; status: locally common; rb
rec: 3; sites: 1; # zones: 1; zones: 4; month: 3, 6; altitude: 2,300

Psophocichla litsitsirupa Groundscraper Thrush; status: fairly common; rb
rec: 2; sites: 2; # zones: 2; zones: 4, 11; month: 4, 6; altitude: 2050–2200

Cossypha semirufa Rüppell's Robin Chat; status: abundant; rb
rec: 3; sites: 3; # zones: 3; zones: 3, 4, 7; month: 3, 4, 10; altitude: 1,650–2,250

Cercotrichas podobe Black Scrub-Robin; status: rare; rb
rec: 6; sites: 5; # zones: 4; zones: 2, 3, 8, 9; month: 2, 4, 6, 10; altitude: 50–1,200

Phoenicurus phoenicurus Common Redstart; status: locally common; p+
rec: 9; sites: 8; # zones: 5; zones: 3, 5, 6, 7, 11; month: 3, 4, 11; altitude: 1,400–2,400
comments: >50 birds passing in two hours

Saxicola torquata Common Stonechat; status: common; p+
rec: 2; sites: 2; # zones: 2; zones: 3, 4; month: 3, 10; altitude: 2,200–2,400

Oenanthe oenanthe Northern Wheatear; status: locally common; p
rec: 9; sites: 3; # zones: 2; zones: 3, 4; month: 2, 3, 4, 10, 11; altitude: 1,900–2,500

Oenanthe pleschanka Pied Wheatear; status: abundant; p+
rec: 3; sites: 2; # zones: 2; zones: 4, 7; month: 2, 3; altitude: 1,650–2,400

Oenanthe hispanica Black-eared Wheatear; status: locally common; p+
rec: 4; sites: 3; # zones: 2; zones: 4, 7; month: 3, 10, 11; altitude: 1,650–2,400

Oenanthe lugens (incl. *lugubris*) Mourning Wheatear; status: abundant; rb
rec: 13; sites: 9; # zones: 5; zones: 3, 4, 5, 7, 8; month: 2, 3, 4, 6, 10, 11; altitude: 1,200–2,500

Oenanthe bottae (incl. *heuglini*) Red-breasted (Botta's) Wheatear; status: rare; v
rec: 1; sites: 1; # zones: 1; zones: 4; month: 4; altitude: 2,500
comments: considered two species in Smith[15]

Oenanthe isabellina Isabelline Wheatear; status: abundant; p+
rec: 1; sites: 1; # zones: 1; zones: 4; month: 11; altitude: 2,500

Cercomela melanura Blackstart; status: rare; rb
rec: 3; sites: 2; # zones: 1; zones: 2; month: 2, 4, 10; altitude: 50–150

Myrmecocichla melaena Rüppell's Black Chat; status: rare; rb, e
rec: 1; sites: 1; # zones: 1; zones: 5; month: 4; altitude: 2,370

Myrmecocichla albifrons White-fronted Black Chat; status: rare; r
rec: 7; sites: 1; # zones: 1; zones: 7; month: 2, 3, 10; altitude: 1,650
comments: males without white shoulder patch

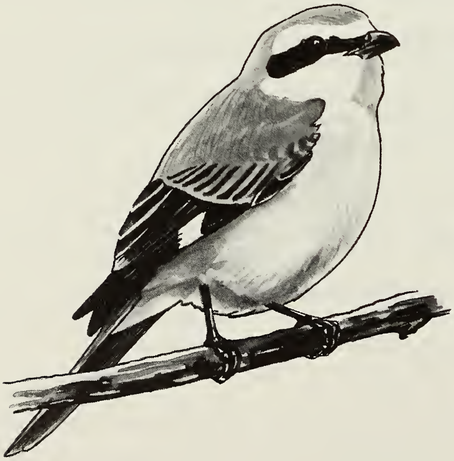
Myrmecocichla cinnamomeiventris Mocking Cliffchat; status: rare; rb
rec: 6; sites: 6; # zones: 3; zones: 3, 4, 7; month: 3, 4, 10, 11; altitude: 1650–2,400

Myrmecocichla semirufa White-winged Cliffchat; status: rare; rb, e
rec: 1; sites: 1; # zones: 1; zones: 5; month: 4; altitude: 2,370

Acrocephalus arundinaceus Great Reed-Warbler; status: common; p+
rec: 1; sites: 1; # zones: 1; zones: 2; month: 10; altitude: 50

Eremomela icteropygialis Yellow-bellied Eremomela; status: locally common; r
rec: 2; sites: 1; # zones: 1; zones: 7; month: 3, 10; altitude: 1,650

Phylloscopus collybita Common Chiffchaff; status: common; p+
rec: 2; sites: 2; # zones: 2; zones: 3, 4; month: 2, 10; altitude: 2,150–2,250
comments: probably included other *Phylloscopus* species



Red-tailed Shrike *Lanius isabellinus*
by Mark Andrews

Sylvia atricapilla Blackcap; status: common; p+
rec: 5; sites: 5; # zones: 5; zones: 2, 3, 5, 7, 11; month: 3, 4, 10; altitude: 50–2,400
comments: mm + ff

Sylvia communis Common Whitethroat; status: abundant; p+
rec: 1; sites: 1; # zones: 1; zones: 7; month: 11; altitude: 1,750

Prinia subflava Tawny-flanked Prinia; status: fairly common; rb
rec: 2; sites: 2; # zones: 2; zones: 3, 9; month: 10; altitude: 700–2,200

Urorhipis rufifrons Red-fronted Warbler; status: locally common; rb
rec: 1; sites: 1; # zones: 1; zones: 2; month: 10; altitude: 150

Camaroptera brachyura Bleating Warbler; status: locally common; r
rec: 2; sites: 1; # zones: 1; zones: 7; month: 3, 10; altitude: 1,650

Batis orientalis Grey-headed Batis; status: fairly common; rb
rec: 3; sites: 2; # zones: 2; zones: 3, 7; month: 3, 10; altitude: 950–1,650

Terpsiphone viridis African Paradise Flycatcher; status: fairly common; rb
rec: 4; sites: 4; # zones: 3; zones: 2, 3, 7; month: 2, 6, 10, 11; altitude: 180–1,650

Turdoides leucopygius White-rumped Babbler; status: common; r
rec: 13; sites: 8; # zones: 5; zones: 2, 3, 4, 5, 7; month: 2, 3, 4, 6, 10, 11; altitude: 180–2,370

Parus leucomelas Northern Black Tit; status: rare; r
rec: 1; sites: 1; # zones: 1; zones: 7; month: 3; altitude: 1,650

Chalcomitra senegalensis Scarlet-chested Sunbird; status: locally common; rb
rec: 4; sites: 3; # zones: 3; zones: 3, 4, 10; month: 2, 4, 10; altitude: 950–2,300

Cinnyris venusta Variable Sunbird; status: locally common; rb
rec: 18; sites: 9; # zones: 5; zones: 3, 4, 5, 7, 10; month: 2, 3, 4, 6, 10, 11; altitude: 1,650–2,400

Cinnyris mariquensis Marico Sunbird; status: rare; r
rec: 3; sites: 2; # zones: 2; zones: 3, 7; month: 3, 10; altitude: 1,650–2,000

Cinnyris pulchella Beautiful Sunbird; status: rare; rb
rec: 1; sites: 1; # zones: 1; zones: 6; month: 4; altitude: 1,400

Nectarinia tacazze Tacazze Sunbird; status: fairly common; rb
rec: 3; sites: 2; # zones: 1; zones: 4; month: 3, 6, 10; altitude: 2,200–2,300

Zosterops poliogaster Mountain White-eye; status: rare; rb
rec: 4; sites: 4; # zones: 4; zones: 3, 8, 10, 11; month: 4; altitude: 1,950–2,200

Lanius collurio Red-backed Shrike; status: fairly common; p
rec: 2; sites: 2; # zones: 2; zones: 3, 4; month: 2, 10; altitude: 2,500

Lanius isabellinus Red-tailed Shrike; status: fairly common; p
rec: 1; sites: 1; # zones: 1; zones: 2; month: 4; altitude: 50

Lanius minor Lesser Grey Shrike; status: locally common; p
rec: 1; sites: 1; # zones: 1; zones: 2; month: 4; altitude: 50

Lanius meridionalis Southern Grey Shrike; status: common; rb
rec: 6; sites: 5; # zones: 4; zones: 2, 3, 4, 8; month: 6, 10; altitude: 50–2,500
comments: included within *Lanius excubitor* by Smith[15] and Dowsett & Dowsett-Lemaire[4]

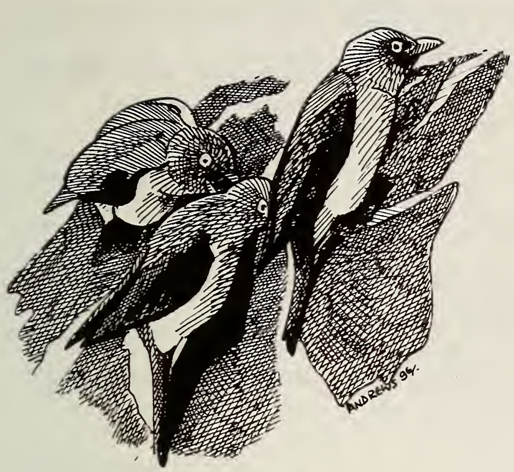
Lanius collaris Fiscal Shrike; status: abundant; rb
rec: 15; sites: 7; # zones: 5; zones: 3, 4, 5, 7, 11; month: 2, 3, 4, 6, 10; altitude: 2,000–2,400

Lanius senator Woodchat Shrike; status: common; p
rec: 1; sites: 1; # zones: 1; zones: 4; month: 3; altitude: 2,200

Lanius nubicus Masked Shrike; status: locally common; p
rec: 3; sites: 3; # zones: 3; zones: 2, 7, 8; month: 4, 11; altitude: 50–1,950

Dryoscopus gambensis Northern Puffback; status: locally common; r
rec: 2; sites: 2; # zones: 2; zones: 3; month: 2, 10; altitude: 950

Tchagra senegala Black-crowned Tchagra; status: rare; rb
rec: 5; sites: 3; # zones: 3; zones: 3, 4, 7; month: 4, 10, 11; altitude: 1,750–2,300



Red-billed Oxpeckers *Buphagus erythrorhynchus* by Mark Andrews

Telophorus cruentus Rosy-patched Bush-Shrike; status: locally common; rb
rec: 2; sites: 2; # zones: 1; zones: 2; month: 10; altitude: 50–150

Laniarius aethiopicus Tropical Boubou; status: locally common; r
rec: 13; sites: 7; # zones: 2; zones: 3, 7; month: 2, 3, 4, 10, 11; altitude: 950–2,000

Laniarius erythrogaster Black-headed Bush-Shrike; status: locally common; r
rec: 1; sites: 1; # zones: 1; zones: 12; month: 6; altitude: 950

Malaconotus blanchoti Grey-headed Bush-Shrike; status: rare; r
rec: 3; sites: 2; # zones: 2; zones: 3, 7; month: 10; altitude: 950–1,650

Dicrurus adsimilis African Drongo; status: fairly common; rb
rec: 9; sites: 6; # zones: 4; zones: 2, 3, 7, 8; month: 2, 3, 4, 6, 10, 11; altitude: 100–1,920

Corvus splendens Indian House Crow; status: ib
rec: 5; sites: 2; # zones: 1; zones: 2; month: 2, 4, 6, 10; altitude: 0–50
comments: br in Massawa and Hirghigo; not listed in Smith[15]

Corvus albus Pied Crow; status: fairly common; rb
rec: 11; sites: 5; # zones: 4; zones: 2, 4, 6, 9; month: 2, 3, 4, 6, 10; altitude: 0–2,500

Corvus capensis Cape Rook; status: locally common; rb
rec: 12; sites: 4; # zones: 2; zones: 4, 11; month: 2, 3, 4, 6, 10, 11; altitude: 2,050–2,500
comments: br, feeding young

Corvus rhipidurus Fan-tailed Raven; status: locally common; rb
rec: 25; sites: 12; # zones: 6; zones: 3, 4, 5, 7, 8, 11; month: 2, 3, 4, 6, 10, 11; altitude: 1,200–2,500

Onychognathus blythii Somali Starling; status: fairly common; rb
rec: 9; sites: 4; # zones: 3; zones: 4, 7, 8; month: 2, 3, 4, 6, 10, 11; altitude: 1,650–2,500
comments: br in Asmera

Onychognathus albirostris White-billed Starling; status: fairly common; rb, e
rec: 1; sites: 1; # zones: 1; zones: 5; month: 4; altitude: 2,370

Lamprotornis chalybaeus Greater Blue-eared Starling; status: locally common; rb
rec: 14; sites: 10; # zones: 7; zones: 3, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 11; month: 2, 3, 4, 6, 10, 11; altitude: 650–2,370
comments: probably included some *L. chloropterus*

Lamprotornis purpuropterus Rüppell's Glossy Starling; status: common; rb
rec: 5; sites: 5; # zones: 2; zones: 7, 9; month: 2, 6, 10, 11; altitude: 650–1,750

Lamprotornis pulcher Chestnut-bellied Starling; status: common; rb
rec: 13; sites: 7; # zones: 4; zones: 2, 7, 8, 9; month: 2, 3, 6, 10, 11; altitude: 180–1,950

Cinnyricinclus leucogaster Violet-backed Starling; status: fairly common; m
rec: 2; sites: 2; # zones: 2; zones: 7, 8; month: 3, 6; altitude: 1,200–1,650

Creatophora cinerea Wattled Starling; status: rare; mb
rec: 2; sites: 2; # zones: 1; zones: 2; month: 4, 6; altitude: 50–180
comments: eight at coast, ten at dam

Buphagus erythrorhynchus Red-billed Oxpecker; status: rare; rb
rec: 8; sites: 6; # zones: 4; zones: 2, 6, 7, 11; month: 4, 10, 11; altitude: 50–2,050

Passer domesticus House Sparrow; status: ?
rec: 5; sites: 3; # zones: 2; zones: 6, 9; month: 2, 4, 6, 10; altitude: 650–1,400
comments: br, Keren, Agordat and Barentu; not listed in Smith[15] or Dowsett & Dowsett-Lemaire[4]

Passer swainsoni Swainson's Sparrow; status: common; rb
rec: 16; sites: 9; # zones: 7; zones: 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 8, 9; month: 2, 3, 4, 6, 10, 11; altitude: 50–2,500
comments: sometimes included with *P. griseus.*

Carpospiza brachydactyla Pale Rock Sparrow; status: rare; p+
rec: 1; sites: 1; # zones: 1; zones: 2; month: 4; altitude: 50

Bubalornis albirostris White-billed Buffalo Weaver; status: locally common; rb
rec: 8; sites: 5; # zones: 5; zones: 2, 3, 6, 7, 9; month: 3, 4, 6, 10, 11; altitude: 180–1,750

Sporopipes frontalis Speckle-fronted Weaver; status: rare; rb
rec: 5; sites: 2; # zones: 1; zones: 7; month: 3, 10, 11; altitude: 1,650–1,750

Plocepasser superciliosus Chestnut-crowned Sparrow Weaver; status: rare; rb
rec: 2; sites: 2; # zones: 1; zones: 7; month: 3, 11; altitude: 1,650–1,750

Ploceus baglafecht Baglafecht Weaver; status: rare; rb
rec: 8; sites: 5; # zones: 4; zones: 3, 4, 5, 6; month: 3, 4, 6, 10; altitude: 1,400–2,370
comments: br, nest building in June in highland

Ploceus luteolus Little Weaver; status: common; rb
rec: 1; sites: 1; # zones: 1; zones: 7; month: 4; altitude: 2000

Ploceus galbula Rüppell's Weaver; status: abundant; rb
rec: 1; sites: 1; # zones: 1; zones: 2; month: 4; altitude: 50

Ploceus cucullatus Village Weaver; status: locally common; rb
rec: 11; sites: 6; # zones: 5; zones: 2, 3, 4, 6, 7; month: 3, 4, 6, 10; altitude: 50–2,300
comments: br, nest building in June in highland

Quelea quelea Red-billed Quelea; status: locally common; r
rec: 1; sites: 1; # zones: 1; zones: 2; month: 4; altitude: 50

Lagonosticta senegala Red-billed Firefinch; status: common; rb
rec: 4; sites: 2; # zones: 2; zones: 3, 4; month: 3, 10; altitude: 1,750–2,500

Estrilda rhodopyga Crimson-rumped Waxbill; status: common; rb
rec: 1; sites: 1; # zones: 1; zones: 3; month: 10; altitude: 1,700

Uraeginthus bengalus Red-cheeked Cordon-bleu; status: rare; rb
rec: 12; sites: 6; # zones: 3; zones: 3, 4, 7; month: 2, 3, 4, 6, 10, 11; altitude: 1,650–2,300

Lonchura cantans African Silverbill; status: locally common; rb
rec: 9; sites: 6; # zones: 3; zones: 2, 4, 7; month: 3, 4, 6, 10, 11; altitude: 50–2,500
comments: br, nest building in October in Mareb River catchment area

Amadina fasciata Cut-throat; status: fairly common; rb
rec: 2; sites: 2; # zones: 2; zones: 4, 7; month: 3, 11; altitude: 1,750–2,200

Vidua chalybeata Village Indigobird; status: rare; r
rec: 3; sites: 3; # zones: 3; zones: 4, 7, 9; month: 3, 10, 11; altitude: 700–2,200

Vidua macroura Pin-tailed Whydah; status: fairly common; r
rec: 1; sites: 1; # zones: 1; zones: 7; month: 11; altitude: 1,750

Vidua orientalis Northern Paradise Whydah; status: locally common; r
rec: 3; sites: 3; # zones: 2; zones: 7, 9; month: 2, 10, 11; altitude: 700–1,750
comment: sometimes included within *V. paradisaea.*

Serinus canicollis Yellow-crowned (Cape) Canary; status: locally common; r
rec: 1; sites: 1; # zones: 1; zones: 4; month: 6; altitude: 2,400

Serinus citrinelloides African Citril; status: locally common; r
rec: 4; sites: 2; # zones: 1; zones: 4; month: 3, 6, 10; altitude: 2,200–2,300

Serinus xanthopygius White-throated Serin (Abyssinian Yellow-rumped Seedeater); status: fairly common; r
rec: 1; sites: 1; # zones: 1; zones: 4; month: 10; altitude: 2,500

Serinus mozambicus Yellow-fronted Serin; status: locally common; r
rec: 2; sites: 2; # zones: 2; zones: 4, 7; month: 3, 10; altitude: 1,650–2,300

Serinus tristriatus Brown-rumped Seedeater; status: abundant; rb
rec: 7; sites: 4; # zones: 2; zones: 3, 4; month: 2, 4, 10, 11; altitude: 2150–2400

Serinus striolatus Streaky Seedeater; status: rare; r
rec: 10; sites: 5; # zones: 2; zones: 3, 4; month: 2, 3, 4, 6, 10; altitude: 2,000–2,300

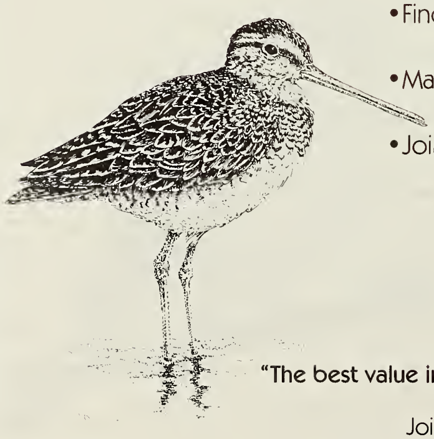
Emberiza cineracea Cinereous Bunting; status: rare; p
rec: 1; sites: 1; # zones: 1; zones: 4; month: 3; altitude: 2,200
comments: Near-threatened

Emberiza hortulana Ortolan Bunting; status: locally common; p
rec: 4; sites: 2; # zones: 2; zones: 2, 4; month: 3, 4; altitude: 50–2,500

Emberiza striolata House Bunting; status: fairly common; r
rec: 1; sites: 1; # zones: 1; zones: 2; month: 4; altitude: 50

Emberiza tahapisi Cinnamon-breasted Rock Bunting; status: common; r
rec: 6; sites: 3; # zones: 2; zones: 2, 7; month: 3, 4, 10, 11; altitude: 50–1,750

Emberiza flaviventris African Golden-breasted Bunting; status: fairly common; rb
rec: 3; sites: 2; # zones: 1; zones: 7; month: 3, 11; altitude: 1,650–1,750



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Pelagic seabird report and status review of selected species occurring off the Atlantic coast of Morocco

R.J.G. Dawson[a], C.G.R. Bowden[b] and H.M. Cameron[a]

La connaissance de la distribution des oiseaux de mer au large de l'Afrique du nord-ouest est encore très imparfaite, avec la plupart des études faites au large du Sénégal. Nous avons examiné le potentiel pour des sorties en mer au large du Maroc à l'occasion d'une sortie d'environ 25 milles nautiques au large d'Agadir, le 24 octobre 1999. Au total, 1533 individus de 25 espèces furent notés, parmi lesquelles le Puffin majeur *Puffinus gravis*, le Puffin des Baléares *P. puffinus mauretanicus*, l'Océanite de Castro *Oceanodroma castro*, la Mouette de Sabine *Larus sabini* et la Sterne arctique *Sterna paradisaea*. Les possibilités de sorties futures pendant la même saison ainsi qu'à d'autres périodes semblent intéressantes et valent la peine d'être examinées.

Introduction

Seabird movements off the Atlantic coast of Morocco are poorly understood. However, despite relatively low coverage, the diversity of seabirds on the national list indicates the potential; even Wandering Albatross *Diomedea exulans*, Red-billed Tropicbird *Phaethon aethereus* and Masked Booby *Sula dactylatra* have been claimed but not formally accepted. The authority that monitors the national list, the Moroccan Rare Birds Committee (MRBC) or Commission d'Homologation Marocaine (CHM), has prepared a list of species for which detailed descriptions are required[1], which includes 34 seabird species. Whether this reflects relatively low observer coverage or a genuine scarcity of these species in Moroccan waters is unclear. In order to satisfy our curiosity concerning seabird occurrences off Atlantic Morocco, we pursued the possibility of a groundbreaking pelagic trip, partially inspired by the success of observations off Senegal, which shares similar offshore upwellings to Morocco. Off West Africa, upwellings occur because the prevailing wind drifts surface water offshore[2] and the subsequent nutrient loading of surface waters provides rich foraging for seabirds.

Approach

Being based near Agadir, a major port, we were ideally placed to investigate the potential for boat hire. Reference to a sea chart (No. 6227, *Du Cap Sim a l'Oued Massa*. Paris: Service Hydrographique de la Marine. 1962) indicated a suitable route north-west from Agadir beyond the western extent of Cap Rhir, itself a well-known site for land-based observations, where water depths increase rapidly from c50 m to over 1,000 m. Enquiries regarding boat hire indicated that only one craft satisfied the appropriate insurance and safety requirements of a local tourist operator. This was a catamaran (*La Maeva*), operated by a French husband and wife team (Monique and Jean Purgues, tel +212 8 844473, mobile 01158323). The boat was equipped with a Geographical Positioning System (GPS) that permitted tracking of speed, and water depth and temperature. Given wind direction and speed, we expected that by cruising at 6 knots it would take c4 hours to reach the deepest water. After protracted negotiations at the port restaurants, a quantity of assorted, rotting 'fish bits' was acquired on the evening before departure to be used as 'chum'.

The choice of date was borne of necessity through personal availability and was not based on previous records. A total of 11 people participated, including biological researchers, teachers and National Park staff, but only three had field identification skills that included experience of the major groups.

Route and methods

See Fig 1. We departed Agadir on 24 October 1999 at 07.20 hr, returning at 18.20 hr, spending 11 hours at sea. The return was in a shallow arc, meaning that we spent more time closer to land. This area was reputed to be better for cetaceans, including Killer Whale *Orcinus orca*, but none were seen. A north-west bearing (280°) was taken until c25 nautical miles from Agadir. This brought us over the deepest waters where 'chumming' was undertaken. After two hours exploring deeper waters we returned to harbour. Initially, one-hour recording periods were maintained, commencing on the hour. The first period, when leaving harbour, was 40 minutes. From 13.30 to 15.00 hrs recording periods were not maintained, as 'chumming' was performed and lunch taken. Hourly recording periods were reinstated at 15.00–18.00 hr. The final 20 minutes were in darkness.

Results

Observations of 1,533 individuals of 25 species are summarised in Table 1, including 59 unidentified individuals (45 storm-petrels, 12 small skuas and two small shearwaters) or 4% of the total. Being one of the first pelagics in Moroccan waters, it seemed likely we would encounter species previously only rarely recorded from land. We recorded nine species (denoted in bold in Table 1) requiring formal documentation. The most significant observation was the minimum 34 Madeiran Storm-Petrels *Oceanodroma castro*. Of the 45 unidentified storm-petrels a substantial proportion were probably this species.

Shearwaters and petrels

Cory's Shearwater *Calonectris diomedea* was by far the most abundant of the five shearwater species recorded, being particularly evident in the evening. Evening aggregations of shearwaters and, to a lesser extent, Northern Gannets *Sula bassana* in the relatively shallow waters (<100 m) off Agadir are conspicuous and may be regular at this time of year (CGB pers obs). Cory's Shearwaters depart the Mediterranean in October–November[6], coinciding with numbers observed off Agadir. However, the influence of late autumn storms, such as that which had recently subsided before our trip, may be significant. The 12 Great Shearwater *Puffinus gravis* were identified within the evening aggregation. Given that over 1,000 shearwaters were probably present in the bay, it is almost certain that more Great Shearwater were present. This species has previously been recorded in association with Cory's Shearwater during a heavy passage off Mediterranean Morocco, e.g. ten among 1,200 Cory's Shearwaters that passed in ten minutes on 1 November 1972[6]. It is possible that any large movement of Cory's Shearwater in late summer or autumn may contain Great Shearwaters, and the latter is probably under-recorded. Sooty Shearwater *P. griseus* was relatively scarce, with six recorded, of which three were in the evening.

small shearwater by Craig Robson

Our observations of smaller shearwaters are of particular interest. We recorded 11 Manx *P. puffinus* and three Balearic Shearwaters *P. (puffinus) mauretanicus*, although some duplication may have occurred as the smaller shearwaters were also involved in the evening congregation. In addition, two small shearwaters with characters suggesting Levantine *P. (puffinus) yelkouan* were seen, but dull Manx Shearwaters could not be eliminated. Reports indicate that *P. (puffinus) mauretanicus* is probably an autumn and winter visitor to Atlantic Morocco[3] and it may summer or breed on the Chafarinas Islands, off the Mediterranean coast of Morocco[9]. Our observations from land and at sea suggest the regular occurrence of Balearic Shearwater off the Atlantic coast of Morocco, with small numbers noted in October–November and January–February. This accords with early summer dispersal from the Mediterranean in June, followed by an extended return period in October–January at least. Though the majority may spend summer and autumn off the French coast, it appears that following this some 'overshoot' the Mediterranean and subsequently return north via the Atlantic coast of Morocco. The forthcoming British Ornithologist's Union checklist[10]

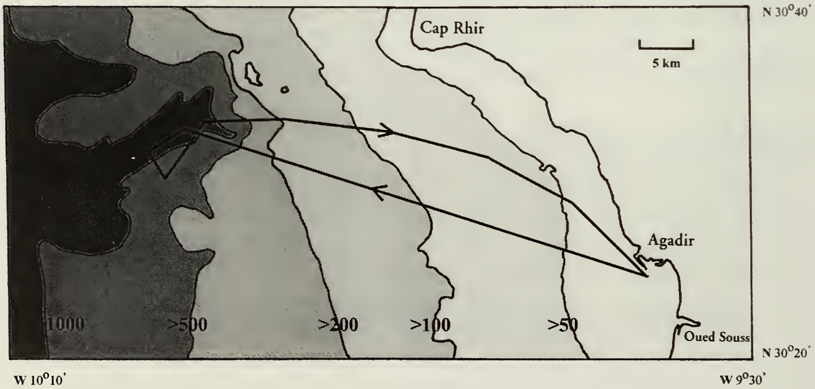


Figure 1. Approximate route of pelagic trip on *La Maeva*, 24 October 1999 from Agadir, Morocco. Approximate water depth (m) also shown.

Table 1. Recording periods and totals of all species recorded from *La Maeva*, 24 October 1999. Species requiring documentation are highlighted in bold. Distances from shore (nautical miles) and depths (m) are given, where available, to facilitate interpretation of data.

Species	harbour	08.00–09.00	09.00–10.00	10.00–11.00	11.00–12.00	12.00–12.30	'Chum' I	'Chum' II	13.30–15.00	15.00–16.00	16.00–17.00	17.00–18.00	Total
Cory's Shearwater *Calonectris diomedea*	0	17	46	39	8	1	2	0	4	16	166	415	714
Great Shearwater *Puffinus gravis*	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	2	9	12
Sooty Shearwater *P. griseus*	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	1	0	0	3	0	6
Manx Shearwater *P. puffinus*	0	8	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	0	11
Balearic Shearwater *P. (p.) mauretanicus*	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	3
small shearwater sp. *Puffinus* sp.	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	2
Wilson's Storm-Petrel *Oceanites oceanicus*	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	1	0	0	0	0	3
British Storm-Petrel *Hydrobates pelagicus*	1	22	7	4	10	1	12	3	1	7	3	3	74
Leach's Storm-Petrel *Oceanodroma leucorhoa*	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Madeiran Storm-Petrel *O. castro*	0	0	0	1	10	5	6	3	5	4	0	0	34
storm-petrel sp. Hydrobatidae sp.	0	0	2	3	22	10	2	0	1	1	1	1	43
Northern Gannet *Sula bassana*	0	14	11	8	6	0	3	0	7	8	65	15	138
Great Cormorant *Phalacrocorax carbo*	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Grey Phalarope *Phalaropus fulicaria*	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Pomarine Skua *Stercorarius pomarinus*	0	0	0	0	2	1	2	0	4	3	2	1	15
Arctic Skua *Stercorarius parasiticus*	1	2	2	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	9
small skua sp. *Stercorarius* sp.	0	4	1	0	1	0	2	0	0	1	1	2	12
Great Skua *Catharacta skua*	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	3
Sabine's Gull *Larus sabini*	0	0	0	0	1–2	0	2	0	4	0	0	0	7–8
Black-headed Gull *L. ridibundus*	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	14	14
Audouin's Gull *L. audouinii*	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
Lesser Black-backed Gull *L. fuscus*	300	9	21	4	5	0	15	0	0	4	6	20	384
Yellow-legged Gull *L. (argentatus) cachinnans*	1	5	1	1	0	0	0	0		0	1	6	15
Sandwich Tern *Sterna sandvicensis*	3	4	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	6	5	19
Common Tern *S. hirundo*	0	0	0	4	0	0	2	0	0	1	1	1	9
Arctic Tern *S. paradisaea*	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Black Tern *Chlidonias niger*	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
Barn Swallow *Hirundo rustica*	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Distance (nautical miles)	-	-	8.7	12.7	18.0	c25	c25	c25	c25	18.0	13.5	7.7	-
Depth (m)	-	-	78	100	250	>1,000	>1,000	c600	>1,000	110	88	66	-

Total 1,533 individuals, 1,476 of 25 species, 57 unidentified

Bulver's Petrel *Bulweria bulwerii* by Craig Robson

lists Manx as an 'uncommon passage migrant and occasional winter visitor', Balearic as an 'common passage migrant and uncommon winter visitor' and Levantine as a 'common passage migrant and rare winter visitor in the Straits'.

Storm-petrels

British Storm-Petrel *Hydrobates pelagicus* totalled 74 individuals and was seen throughout, from Agadir harbour to the deepest waters. The species has previously been recorded here, and in appreciable numbers, with over 100 at Agadir harbour, on 5 February 1998 (*Birding World* 11: 52). This may have been an effect of previous storm conditions, but in winter it does replace Wilson's Storm-Petrel *Oceanites oceanicus* as the common storm-petrel off West Africa. The 45 unidentified storm-petrels were either

Wilson's Storm-Petrel *Oceanites oceanicus* by John Cox

this species, Wilson's or Madeiran Storm-Petrels. British was the only storm-petrel species seen within 12 nautical miles of Agadir (minimum depth c100 m); 57% of storm-petrels were between 20 and 25 nautical miles offshore. The largest concentration was encountered as the water depth increased sharply from 160 m to over 500 m, 20–22 nautical miles off Agadir. Depths continued to increase markedly, to over 1,000 m, where 'chumming' was undertaken. This permitted prolonged views of storm-petrels (among other species) and confirmed the identification of at least three Wilson's Storm-Petrel. While 'chumming', Madeiran Storm-Petrel was present continuously, passing close to the boat. But, while often observed extremely well at close range, it was not seen to follow the boat or feed behind it. Given that it is described as a warm-water species[7], it is interesting to note that the water temperature that in the shallower waters had been consistently near 20°C, in the deeper waters rose by 2°C to 22°C. Madeiran Storm-Petrel is rarely recorded in Moroccan waters, though the nearest colonies are in the Canaries and Madeira. Only one record (of a single) has been accepted by MRBC since its creation in 1995[1] and our observations are therefore of some significance. Only one Leach's Storm-Petrel *Oceanodroma leucorhoa* was noted and it is probable that this species winters farther out to sea.

Gannets and cormorants

A total of 131 Northern Gannets was recorded, most within 12 nautical miles of land and half (65) in the evening shearwater congregation. Very few were seen over deeper waters, though a small number came to 'chum'. In autumn, the main passage at Gibraltar is in late August–mid-November, juveniles in late August–September preceding adults, which pass in October. A variety of ages, from juvenile to adult, was noted but counts of the different age classes were not made. It is probable that some winter off Atlantic Morocco; mostly adults are seen during land-based observations in this period (pers obs). A single Great Cormorant *Phalacrocorax carbo* was in the harbour.

Skuas

Arctic Skua *Stercorarius parasiticus* was seen only within 15 nautical miles of Agadir (as was Sandwich Tern *Sterna sandvicensis*, which is a regular victim of kleptoparasitism). As with personal land-based observations, it was recorded singly. Pomarine Skua *S. pomarinus* was the most common species, but tended to be further from land, several being attracted to 'chum'. Like Cory's Shearwater and Northern Gannet it was more frequent closer to land in the evening, when small groups were regularly noted. The species typically winters off West (and south-west) Africa, taking advantage of upwellings between Senegal and Morocco and could be expected to be the commonest species at this time of year, with most Arctic Skua perhaps having already reached the main winter quarters off south-west Africa. Three single Great Skuas *Catharacta skua* were all flying purposefully southwards and were assumed to be migrants.

Gulls

Commonest was Lesser Black-backed Gull *Larus fuscus*, principally owing to its conspicuous presence at Agadir harbour. However, it was also present up to 25 nautical miles from land, responding rapidly to 'chumming'. Like Pomarine Skua, the species may also utilise the Senegal–Morocco upwellings as feed-

White-faced Storm-Petrel *Pelagodroma marina*
by Mark Andrews

ing grounds and, being opportunistic, readily approaches boats. The overlap in oceanic wintering grounds of these species has been previously noted[2]. A large fishing vessel in the far distance at our farthest point from land had a large number of gulls associated with it, of which most were probably this species. A total of 7–8 Sabine's Gull *L. sabini*, all adults with the exception of a possible juvenile, was one of the highlights of the trip. All were at least 22 nautical miles from Agadir and were in twos, apparently on migration. Four came to 'chum'. The species is rarely observed from land but it probably regularly migrates along the edge of the Atlantic Continental Shelf[4,8]. Those we observed were all in the area of marked change in water depth and though some paused briefly to feed, they appeared to be migrants following the edge of the shelf. Surprisingly, only one Audouin's Gull *L. audouinii* was seen and this relatively close to land.

Terns

A single juvenile Arctic Tern *Sterna paradisea* observed at c22 nautical miles offshore was in close proximity to the first Sabine's Gulls, and also appeared to be migrating along the edge of the shelf. The species is genuinely scarce from land, at least along the Atlantic coast but further observations are required. Several Common *S. hirundo* and Sandwich Terns were noted, the former both near and far from land. A single Black Tern *Chlidonias niger* was observed in the evening. Most had probably already reached their marine winter quarters in coastal tropical West Africa.

Great Skua *Catharacta skua* by Mark Andrews

Waders

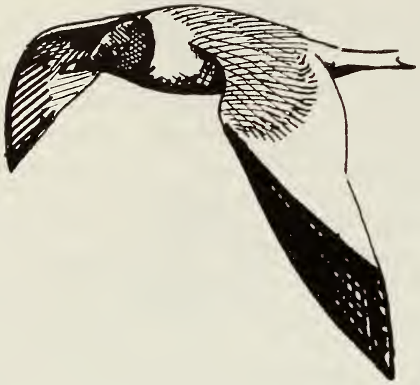
A single Grey Phalarope *Phalaropus fulicaria* was observed.

Discussion and conclusions

The practicalities of arranging the trip were inconsiderable and we hope that our preliminary observations will encourage further exploration. We found that the catamaran, while able to take a maximum of 16 people (thereby reducing the price per person) was relatively cramped with 12. In addition, its relatively low position in the water sometimes made identifications uncertain as birds were easily lost behind waves. Though it would be impossible to venture out in rough weather, we found that even calm conditions were extremely productive, especially beyond 20 nautical miles offshore. The weather, as might be expected, was bright, though an extensive fogbank (c1 nautical mile wide) was encountered c15 nautical miles from land. A heavy initial swell perhaps represented the final effects of a preceding storm, but further out the sea was quite calm and by evening the swell close to land had considerably diminished.

The storm conditions 1–2 days prior to the trip may have resulted in the large number of British Storm-Petrel inshore. Alternatively, these conditions may have enriched the already established upwelling offshore and encouraged a higher density of feeding seabirds in the area. However, we believe that of the large numbers of seabirds in deeper waters, most storm-petrels were following well-established feeding and migration routes along the deepening shelf and benefiting from upwellings along it, particularly from >150 m, and that their distribution was unaffected by the storm. Greatest diversity and numbers were not perhaps in the deepest water, but at 150–500 m, though depth changed so rapidly over a short distance that this impression may be misleading. In addition to the feeding storm-petrels, others such as Lesser Black-backed Gull and Pomarine Skua may have opportunistically taken advantage of food availability in part of their winter range, for example at our 'chum' and near large fishing vessels. Others were apparently migrating, eg Great Skua, Sabine's Gull and Arctic Tern, the Sabine's Gulls pausing briefly to visit the 'chum'.

Most observed species belong to the 'subtropical community'[2] of seabirds and the potential for other species is high. We did not see Black-legged Kittiwake *Rissa tridactyla* or any auks (Razorbill *Alca torda* is perhaps most likely) on the trip, which are representatives of the 'subpolar community' of the Northern Hemisphere and recorded regularly, though rarely, off Morocco. We found the experience of



Sabine's Gull *Larus sabini* by Mark Andrews

viewing many Madeiran Storm-Petrels at close range invaluable, and believe that given reasonable views separation from Leach's and Wilson's Storm-Petrels is relatively straightforward. Though similar numbers of Madeiran Storm-Petrels were reported on pelagics between the Canaries and Madeira, via the Salvages (*Birdwatch* October 1997), a trip from Agadir can be combined with the many other excellent birding opportunities that Morocco offers. We may have been fortunate in that our trip coincided with fledging and subsequent dispersal of Madeiran Storm-Petrel[7] and benefited from the suggested northward movement in summer of the main area of upwelling[2]. Thus, numbers of this species present at other times of year could be very different. There is a report of a White-faced Storm-Petrel *Pelagodroma marina* 25 nautical miles north-west of Agadir, on 31 March 1997[5], which along with other more unusual species, eg Little Shearwater *Puffinus assimilis*, Fea's *Pterodroma (mollis) feae* and Bulwer's Petrels *Bulweria bulwerii*, is a tantalising future possibility.

Most birding visits to Morocco focus on the landbird specialities. Given the success of our trip, we hope that tours and interested individuals will be encouraged to incorporate a pelagic into their itineraries. The evening aggregation we witnessed close inshore means that half-day, as well as full-day, trips (probably essential to see Madeiran Storm-Petrel), represent a productive option, though the extent to which season is important is unknown. Autumn (late August–late November) may be best for both numbers and diversity of species, though spring passage (March–May), or even winter are likely to be interesting.

Acknowledgements

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Selected observations from The Gambia, 1997–1999, with comments on the identification of a number of species

M. D. Crewe

A l'occasion de séjours en Gambie pendant la saison sèche, entre novembre 1997 et novembre 1999, un certain nombre d'observations intéressantes ont été faites. Des données sur 33 espèces, dont certaines sont considérées comme rares dans le pays, sont présentées. Des notes sont incluses concernant l'identification de certaines d'entre elles qui sont assez mal connues ou traitées de façon insatisfaisante dans la littérature.

This paper aims to detail more interesting observations made during tours co-led by myself to The Gambia in 1997–1999, and to comment on species' identification that have been less adequately covered by field guides. Other tour guides included Steve Madge, in 1997 and 1998, Dick Forsman and Dave Cottridge, both in 1999, and several locals, including Seedy Saidy (November 1997), Solomon Jallow (November–December 1998 and February 1999), Tamba Jefang (November–December 1999) and Dembo Sonko (November–December 1998). These local guides have swiftly established a reputation as excellent field ornithologists. Where relevant, notes on the identification of rarer species are included. As most visitors to The Gambia will be armed with the largely excellent field guide by Barlow *et al*[1], I have aimed to discuss a number of errors (most notably among raptors) contained therein, which were brought to light in part through our observations.

Place names

For the purposes of standardisation, all names used here are taken from *The Gambia Traveller's Map*, published by Macmillan (1996). Acronyms are used for the country's main political divisions as follows: WD = Western Division, NBD = North Bank Division, LRD = Lower River Division, CRD = Central River Division and URD = Upper River Division. Note that the Macmillan map still refers to CRD under the old name of MacCarthy Island Division.

1999 weather conditions

Of tours to date, the most interesting was that in late November 1999. The summer wet season had been protracted and had a profound effect on birdlife in several ways. We recorded a number of species that are generally wet-season visitors, either for the first time or in greater numbers than usual (e.g. Beaudouin's Snake Eagle *Circaetus (gallicus) beaudouini* and Rufous-chested Swallow *Hirundo semirufa*). A number of weaver and bishop/widowbird species were still in nuptial plumage, making identification easier and facilitating a greater understanding of their distributions. Finally, there was a notable dearth of Palearctic migrants, which had perhaps found favourable conditions further north and not (yet) arrived. Most notable was the absence of Palearctic warblers, raptors and Turtle Dove *Streptopelia turtur*.

Selected species list

European Spoonbill *Platalea leucorodia*

Immature near Jurunku, NBD on 22 November 1997 and another at Tendaba, LRD, on 27 November 1998 were both with small parties of African Spoonbill *P. alba*. Four flew over Bund Road, Banjul, WD, on 6 February 1999.

Black Egret *Egretta ardesiaca*

Widespread. Barlow *et al*[1] repeat the error made by Hancock & Kushlan[6], Brown *et al*[2] and del Hoyo *et al*[4] by illustrating the species with a pale eye. It is dark and thus a useful identification pointer. The mistake presumably dates to when Slaty *E. vinaceigula* and Black Egrets were considered a single species. Slaty Egret has a pale eye.

Lesser Flamingo *Phoeniconaias minor*

Eleven, with seven Greater Flamingo *Phoenicopterus ruber*, beside the main river opposite Kemoto, near Wandofalo Bolon, NBD, on 2 December 1998.

Honey Buzzard *Pernis apivorus*

Single juveniles, all in 1999, at Marakissa, WD, on 22 November, Pirang, WD, on 23 November, west of Jangjangbureh, CRD, on 30 November and Jakhaly, CRD, on 1 December. Considered a rare migrant[1].

Bat Hawk *Macheiramphus alcinus*

At Tendaba, NBD, in 1999, a single at dusk on 26 November flew north across the river. Subsequently, three, perhaps a family party, hunted over mangroves by Kisi Bolon, NBD, on 1 December, with at least two present the following evening. Very few records for The Gambia and none of multiple individuals[1].

Black Kite *Milvus m. migrans/Milvus m. parasitus*
Widespread and usually common; some confusion exists over the distribution of the two taxa. While some individuals are sufficiently similar as to be inseparable given normal field views, most are reasonably easily distinguished, using head colour, underparts colour and markings, underwing colour and markings, and moult timing.

During our dry-season visits, *parasitus* (the resident form) is usually widespread, though only abundant near the coast, where it occupies the species' typical niche in tropical areas *viz.* as a scavenger around habitation. Inland, it appears generally scattered along the river, where small parties often frequent mangroves. The form *migrans* occurs as a dry-season visitor from the Palearctic. Though singles are occasionally encountered, it generally occurs in groups, wherever abundant food is available. Not noted near the coast, where apparently excluded by *parasitus*. Occurrence clearly depends on weather and food availability, with none recorded in 1999, but a flock of at least 4,000 in an area of several km, north of the river and east of Farafenni, CRD, on 29 November 1998, feeding on a huge grasshopper/locust swarm over dry grassland. This flock (which may have continued into Senegal) represents a significant percentage of the West European breeding population.

Egyptian Vulture *Neophron percnopterus*
Sub-adult (fourth-year) at Sanyang, WD, with Hooded Vultures *Necrosyrtes monachus*, on 9 February 1999. Sanyang appears to be a regular site for the species, though it remains a rarity elsewhere in The Gambia[1].

Beaudouin's Snake-eagle *Circaetus (gallicus) beaudouini*
In 1999 a displaying pair and juvenile at Pirang, WD, on 23 November, three adults between Jangjangbureh and Baboon Island, CRD, on 30 November and two (perhaps some of the same) at Jakhaly rice fields, CRD, on 1 December, with single adults at Faraba Banta, WD, on 26 November, Tendaba, LRD, on 27 November and Bakadagy, URD, on 29 November. Frequently misidentified in the past but, as noted by Clark[3], is easily recognised in the field, at least in adult plumage. Incorrect criteria for its identification have been perpetuated in the literature[1,2,5]. It appears to be a wet-season breeder in The Gambia, which generally moves south and/or east during the dry season. Many past observations may be questionable, as observers have used incorrect identification criteria, perhaps confusing knowledge of its geographical and seasonal range, caused in part by its treatment within Short-toed Eagle in much of the keynote literature[2].

Short-toed Eagle *Circaetus gallicus*
Singles, in 1997, east of Farafenni, CRD, on 24 November, Basse on 25 November and near Jakhaly, CRD, on 26 November, and, in 1998, near Farafenni, CRD, on 29 November and near Jappeni, LRD, on 1 December. Barlow *et al*[1] is confusing for a number of reasons, principally because of the incorrect illustrations of *Circaetus* species. The text states that *beaudouini* may occur, then lists sightings, and also indicates that *gallicus* is recorded in May–July. This appears unlikely, unless first-year, non-breeding *gallicus* remain on the wintering grounds, though a peak in observations still appears strange in this period. It is probable that such observations involve immature *beaudouini*, which are more like *gallicus* in appearance[1].

Montagu's Harrier *Circus pygargus*
Occasional in small numbers. A melanistic male and a female, over saltmarsh at Kisi Bolon, NBD, on 28 November 1998. Melanistic individuals are rare and two together is remarkable. They were sexed on the amount and distribution of white on the underwings.

Red-necked Buzzard *Buteo auguralis*
One at close quarters between Bansang and Jangjangbureh, CRD, on 25 November 1997, and two among a huge flock of Black Kite north of the river in CRD, on 29 November 1998. Typical *Buteo* in structure, but all had much less rufous than indicated in Barlow *et al*[1] with, except for the obvious rusty tail, rufous confined to the head- and neck-sides.

Wahlberg's Eagle *Aquila wahlbergi*
Widespread and quite common. Barlow *et al*[1] oversimplify its identification, making little reference to the appearance of immatures/sub-adults. The former, in particular, can be confusing as they tend to fan the tail more than adults (causing the unwary to often identify such individuals as Tawny Eagle *A. rapax*). During the protracted moult from juvenile to adult plumage, *wahlbergi* may attain a generally buff/pale brown plumage with a dark brown head. This plumage also occurs in Tawny Eagle, but is poorly described in the literature.

Ayres's Hawk Eagle *Hieraaetus ayresii*
Adult over Abuko, WD, on 17 November 1997. A relatively small, compact eagle, shorter winged and stockier than superficially similar African Hawk Eagle *H. spilogaster* with clear barring on flight feathers. Immature at Pirang, WD, on 23 November 1999, was very instructive as Barlow *et al*[1] only cover adult and juvenile plumages. Structurally like Booted Eagle *H. pennatus*, with similar 'landing lights' on leading edge of wing, but all flight and tail feathers clearly barred, no white rump patch and no pale bar on upperwing-coverts. Differences from juvenile plumage included underwing-coverts creamy white (not buff), body creamy (not buff) and clearly had a few heavy, dark flank blotches, indicating adult plumage. This appears to be the first observation of a non-adult in The Gambia. The species' status remains unclear in the country, though it is obviously scarce. Sub-adults could easily be overlooked, especially if distant, when they may be misidentified as Booted Eagles.

Red-necked Falcon *Falco chicquera*
Frequent, usually in pairs and occasionally hunting co-operatively. Confusion exists due to its coverage in Barlow *et al*[1]. All adults seen by MDC in The Gambia have the chestnut confined to the central crown and back of head. The crown-sides and neck are dark blackish brown, creating a head pattern not dissimilar to a diminutive Lanner *F. biarmicus*. Barlow *et al*[1] appear to illustrate the nominate Indian race, which has more extensive chestnut giving a hooded appearance.

Peregrine *Falco peregrinus*
Singles at Denton Bridge, near Banjul, WD, on 19 November 1997, 21 November and 24 November 1998, and 25 November 1999, probably all involve the same wintering individual. Further singles at Kemoto, LRD, on 22 November 1997 and opposite Tendaba, NBD, on 2 December 1999. All were the large, highly migratory race, *calidus*. Barlow *et al*[1] appear confused as to which races occur in The Gambia. *F. p. calidus* is referred to as the Mediterranean race, though this is presumably a misprint. The forms *brookei* and *peregrinus* are cited as potentially occurring, but both are largely sedentary and most likely to be only vagrants.

Yellow-legged Gull *Larus* (*argentatus*) *cachinnans*
Single adult *L. c. michahellis* at Bald Cape, Tanji, WD, on 24 November 1999. Identified by structure, bare-part coloration and mantle tone. This highly dispersive form is perhaps more likely to occur in The Gambia than the largely sedentary *L. c. atlantis*.

Roseate Tern *Sterna dougallii*
At least four in a large mixed flock of gulls and terns at Bald Point, Tanji, WD, on 24 November 1999. All were in first-winter plumage and initially noticed due to their obviously long, fine bills. The plumage is little described and such individuals could be easily overlooked. All had an obvious dark bar on the lesser coverts (like other small *Sterna* terns) with dark, retained juvenile primaries, all reducing the obvious pale appearance typical of adults.

African Cuckoo *Cuculus gularis*
Five recorded in late 1999, the latest at Tubab Kollon, near Tendaba, LRD, on 2 December. Three sightings involved juveniles and two (including the last) involved adults. Usually only a wet-season visitor[1].

Plain Nightjar *Caprimulgus inornatus*
On 23 November 1997, one was dazzled in the headlights of our vehicle on a dirt track a few km south-east of Kemoto, LRD. It was seen well and I noted the overall pale greyish coloration, lack of a white throat patch or obvious white tips to the wing-coverts, and fine dark flecking on the pale crown, which eliminate all other possible species. Apparently the third record in The Gambia[1], but all nightjars are likely to be under-recorded in the country.

Red-necked Nightjar *Caprimulgus ruficollis*
A road casualty on the dirt track to Kemoto, LRD, on 22 November 1997.

Shining-blue Kingfisher *Alcedo quadribrachys*
One on the Allahein River at Darsilami, near Marakissa, WD, on 23 November 1998. Rare in The Gambia[1].

(Northern) Carmine Bee-eater *Merops nubicus*
Regular at well-known locations at Basse, URD. Less expected were eight, with Blue-cheeked Bee-eaters *M. persicus*, in mangroves near Jurunku, NBD, on 2 December 1998.

Brown-throated Sand Martin *Riparia paludicola*
In 1997, singles at Brumen Bridge, LRD, on 21 November and nearby Kemoto, LRD, on 22 November. The former was seen particularly well as it hawked at close quarters, permitting appreciation of its overall rather pale coloration, especially the rump, which suggests that it may have been of the race *mauretanica* rather than the Central African form *paludibula*.

Red-breasted Swallow *Hirundo semirufa*
1999 produced 20 at Pirang shrimp ponds, WD, on 23 November and ten over the Gambia River between Jangjangbureh and Baboon Island, CRD, on 30 November. A wet-season visitor[1].

Red-chested Swallow *Hirundo lucida*
Widespread. Separation of this species and Barn Swallow *H. rustica* often causes problems, though the tail pattern is diagnostic. This obvious feature is neither illustrated in Barlow *et al*[1] nor stressed in the text. In flight, *lucida* has an almost completely white undertail, with dark confined to the outer, rather short streamers, and narrowly on the edges of the remaining feathers.

Tawny Pipit *Anthus campestris*
One at close quarters at Lamin Fields, WD, on 7 February 1999. There appear to be few Gambian reports, but Barlow *et al*[1] suggest that it is under-recorded.

Bluethroat *Luscinia svecica*
Winter-plumaged male of the white-spotted form *L. s. cyanecula* at Jakhaly rice fields, on 26 November 1997. Barlow *et al*[1] consider the species rare to uncommon. Its typically shy behaviour and the presence of extensive suitable habitat in The Gambia suggest it may be under-recorded.

Rock Thrush *Monticola saxatilis*
Male coming into breeding plumage at Yundum on 7 February 1999. Barlow *et al*[1] consider the species rare to uncommon, being recorded less than annually.

Great Reed Warbler *Acrocephalus arundinaceus*
Two records in 1999: one singing on the north bank of the river near Barajali, CRD, on 30 November and two singing in *Phragmites australis* near Pakali Ba, CRD, on 1 December. Considered rare in The Gambia[1].

Greater Swamp-Warbler *Acrocephalus rufescens*
At least three singing in mixed *Phragmites*/*Typha* stands near Pakali Ba, CRD, on 1 December. Though generally very skulking, one responded well to tape and showed reasonably well. A large, rather dull, grey-brown and short-winged warbler. Rather nondescript, but the unusual song is diagnostic. Little known in The Gambia[1].

Southern Grey Shrike *Lanius meridionalis*
One between Bambatenda and Farafenni, NBD, on 29 November 1998. Plumage features (rump and underparts colour) indicated that it was of the form *elegans*.

Chestnut-bellied Starling *Lamprotornis pulcher*
Eleven on roadside wires and feeding on the ground at Yundum, WD, on 18 November 1997. Scarce in The Gambia, apparently erratic and movements poorly understood[1].

Green-winged Pytilia *Pytilia melba*
Four, including two adult males, in a mixed feeding flock near Dipa Kunda, east of Farfenni, NBD, on 28 November. Rarely observed in The Gambia, with no previous records in NBD, though its presence was expected[1].

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Have birds shifted their range limits southwards in Côte d'Ivoire, West Africa?

Volker Salewski[a], Hugo Rainey[b] and Franz Bairlein[a]

Les changements du climat (réchauffement planétaire) ont provoqué, sous les latitudes nordiques, des changements notables dans la phénologie et la distribution de certaines populations d'oiseaux. Bien que sous les tropiques les changements potentiels n'aient pas encore été étudiés, il est probable que des populations soient touchées par la modification de l'habitat due aux changements du climat et aux activités humaines. L'article présente des données qui indiquent qu'un nombre significativement plus grand d'espèces d'oiseaux en Côte d'Ivoire pourrait avoir étendu son aire de distribution vers le sud (plutôt que vers le nord) pendant les 15 dernières années, et ces résultats sont examinés dans le contexte des changements du climat et de l'habitat local.

Introduction

Global temperatures rose during the 20th century and further warming is predicted for the current century as a result of human activities. This will eventually cause alterations to the Earth's habitats and shifts in climatic and vegetational zones, both in altitude and latitude[16]. Plant and animal species that are adjusted to certain climates and habitats are thought to react to such changes by adjusting their range to the changing environmental gradients and/or their behaviour accordingly. Many reactions reported from northern temperate regions during the last decade have been directly related to climate change. Examples include increased plant growth at northern latitudes[14], faunal changes in rocky intertidal pools[3], poleward shifts of North American[15] and European butterflies[16], changes in egg-laying trends[1,5,6], and timing of migration[1,23,24] and northward range extensions in European birds[28]. However, climatic change is likely to have global effects. One of these, compounded by regional mismanagement including forest clearance or overgrazing by livestock, is the desertification of vast areas in the tropics. This may not solely affect desert fringes but could produce a general shift in vegetation zones, eg of different savanna types.

African Broadbill *Smithornis capensis*
by Mark Andrews

Here we present data indicating that a greater number of bird species in Côte d'Ivoire, West Africa, have been observed further south of their range limits, as known in 1985, than further north during the past 15 years. We do not present conclusive evidence of range extensions for these species but discuss the possibility that they have occurred due to global warming or habitat alteration. In so doing we seek to demonstrate the need for more sophisticated research in this field (aside from random anecdotal observations) to reveal range shifts or range extensions of tropical species, along with studies of the general effects of global warming on tropical communities.

Methods

We analysed observations of latitudinal shifts in range limits of bird species in Côte d'Ivoire, West Africa (05°–11°N). The geographic range of all species recorded in the country was summarised in 1985[25]. The publication was based on observations throughout the country made in 1967–1984, but, as older records were classified 'historical', it represents real knowledge of the ranges of birds in 1984 within Côte d'Ivoire (Thiollay pers comm). Since 1985 a number of published observations from different localities have reported north or south range extensions for several species in the country[2,8,9,12,20–22,26,29].

Additionally, we have utilised a number of personal unpublished observations.

We assumed that observations were random without observer preference for northern or southern areas (though this may not be true). We traced observations from localities in coastal areas (04°40'N–05°20'N), Lamto (06°13'N), Yapo (05°42'N), Comoé National Park (08°40'N–09°35'N) and Leraba (10°06'N), which are distributed throughout the country. Further we assumed that equal numbers of bird species would have been recorded either north or south of their former range, if apparent range extensions were solely the result of increased observer activity, which might be expected to produce records of easily overlooked (skulking or nocturnal), or uncommon species not previously reported from a given region of the country.

We listed all bird species exhibiting a shift in their former reported range limits[25] greater than c110 km (01° latitude), provided that the species had been recorded more than once in the country prior to 1985. This caveat was introduced in order to reduce the likelihood of occasional, wandering migrants having a disproportionate effect on the results. Thiollay[25] reported *Lagonosticta rufopicta* as occurring north of 09°N but the four 'old' records mentioned by him appear to be from 10°12'N to 07°31'N[18]. Therefore, we used the latter figure in our analysis. *Estrilda caerulescens* was excluded from the analysis, despite fulfilling our criteria, because Demey & Fishpool[8], who recorded it in Abidjan, speculated that an escaped cage bird was involved. Observations of the species, c6 km east of Bingerville in 1999 (HR pers obs), may also have resulted from escapees. If a new record was from an area, rather than a distinct locality, we considered the nearest border to the former locality as the reference (eg southern fringe of Comoé National Park, if the former locality was further south and the new observation in Comoé National Park). Therefore, our data included the minimum number of species that have extended their range. Palearctic migrants were excluded from the analysis, though eight species fulfilled our criteria. Four were observed further north than reported by

Table 1. Observations of southward range limit (>01°) shifts of birds in Côte d'Ivoire since 1985[25]

Species	**Range limit in Thiollay[25]**	**New location**	**Reference**	**Distance**
Mycteria ibis	Comoé NP	between Daloa and Douékoué	Demey & Fishpool[8]	01°54'
Ciconia abdimii	Bouaké	Grand Bassam	Demey & Fishpool[8]	02°33'
Sarkidiornis melanotus	09°30'	Dabou	Demey & Fishpool[8]	03°11'
Gyps africanus	Lamto	Sassandra	O Lachenaud pers comm	01°15'
Agapornis pullarius	Boundiali	Yapo	Balchin[2]	03°49'
Oxylophus jacobinus	Comoé NP	Adiopodoumé	Demey & Fishpool[8]	02°19'
Caprimulgus tristigma	Comoé NP	Taï (town)	pers obs	02°47'
Tachymarptis aequatorialis	Mt Nimba	Abidjan	pers obs	02°16'
Apus caffer	Bouaké	Abidjan	pers obs	02°26'
Phoeniculus aterrimus	Bouaké	Lamto	Demey & Fishpool[8]	01°32'
Riparia cincta	Comoé NP	Adiopodoumé	Demey & Fishpool[8]	03°19'
Hirundo preussi	Korhogo	Blolékin	Gatter[12]	03°01'
Hirundo aethiopica	Katiola	Grand Bassam	Demey & Fishpool[8]	02°56'
Hirundo lucida	Lamto	San Pedro	Gatter[12]	01°29'
Myrmecocichla cinnamomeiventris	Touba	Marahoue	pers obs	01°17'
Apalis flavida	Comoé NP	Mt Tonkui	Balchin[2]	01°14'
Lagonosticta rufopicta	north of 9°(07°31')	Lamto	Thiollay[26]	02°47'01°18'
Ortygospiza atricollis	Man	Assinie	Demey & Fishpool[8]	02°24'
Emberiza tahapisi	Niangbo	Lamto	Salewski & Göken[22]	02°36'

Table 2. Observations of northward range limit (>01°) shifts of birds in Côte d'Ivoire since 1985[25]

Species	**Range limit in Thiollay[25]**	**New location**	**Reference**	**Distance**
Microparra capensis	Bouaké	Kafolo	Kühn & Späth[13]	02°13'
Smithornis capensis	Beoumi	Comoé NP	Demey & Fishpool[8]	01°09'
Muscicapa caerulescens	Danané	Comoé NP	Salewski[20]	01°29'
Turdoides reinwardii	Sipilou	Comoé NP, Gué Auto	pers obs	01°21'
Anthoscopus flavifrons	Tai NP	Danané	Gatter[12]	01°09'
Ploceus nigricollis	never north of 8°	23 km south of Ferkesedougou	Demey & Fishpool[8]	>01°
Mandingoa nitidula	Mt Nimba	Comoé NP	Salewski & Korb[21]	01°15'

Thiollay[25]. As migration can be expected near-continent wide[10] it is very unlikely that these observations represent range extensions. However, intra-African migrants were included because their movements are still very poorly known, including the extent to which different populations are involved. Furthermore, as these migrations are likely to occur between different vegetation and climate zones, a shift in the spatial distribution of these zones could lead to a real range extension or shift of the species involved. Finally, we confined the study to Côte d'Ivoire because the different vegetation zones form distinct belts, comparable with the list of Thiollay[25]. Comparing this list with the situation in other countries, eg neighbouring Ghana where Guinea savanna reaches the coast in the Dahomey Gap, would lead to biased results because of the different arrangement of the vegetation zones.

Results

Records of changes in range limits were noted for 26 species (Tables 1–2). Significantly more species were observed further south (19, Table 1) than north (seven, Table 2) compared to known range limits in 1985 (binomial test, two-tailed p = 0.03).

It might be expected that when observation efforts are spread randomly over a country and changes in range limits are recorded through increased observer activity, better equipment, or new observations of easily overlooked species or vagrants missed by previous observers, that this would produce a broadly equal number of northern and southern records. This is not the case and our data suggest a trend for birds to shift their range limits south in Côte d'Ivoire.

Discussion

Range extensions can be caused by global (eg climatic change) or local (eg habitat change) factors[25]. The drought which has affected the Sahel region during the past 20 years has also influenced areas further south, as indicated by the decrease in rainfall in Côte d'Ivoire and other West African countries, eg Togo and Bénin[17]. In Côte d'Ivoire such a decrease was evidenced in the country's forest zone from the late 1950s for c30 years (Fig 1), which must have affected local vegetation. Furthermore, intensive clearance of rainforest and other wooded habitats has occurred in the country during recent decades[4,11,26] accelerating the effects of reduced rainfall and rise in global temperatures. Both could lead to range shifts or extensions of species from northern Sahelian regions to the altered Guinea savannas of the south, which has been suggested for *Eremopterix leucotis*[25], although the species is known to wander and this was postulated on the basis of one record. However, our data do perhaps support this assumption. A similar effect had been observed prior to 1985 whereby several species of northern origin had been noted with increased frequency[25], while savanna raptor species may have shifted their distribution south, or increased in the south of their ranges[27].

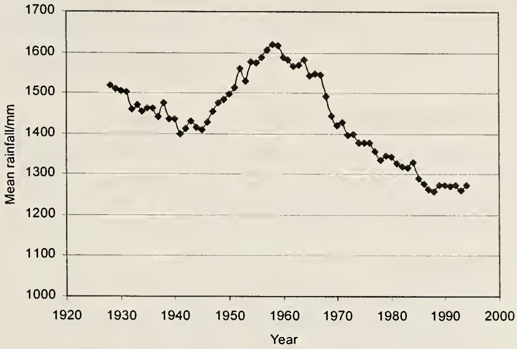

Figure 1. Eleven-year running mean of average rainfall from the 1920s to 1999 for five meteorology stations (Gagnoa, Man, Dimbokro, Daloa and Sassandra) in the forest zone of Côte d'Ivoire. Source: Sodexam, Abidjan.

It is unclear whether climate change or human activities play the major role, but both are probably responsible for present habitat alterations and cumulatively accelerate[19] the reactions of species assemblages in the region.

The affect on bird species may be even more pronounced than it appears from this study. Species such as *Smithornis capensis*, *Muscicapa caerulescens*, *Turdoides reinwardii*, *Anthoscopus flavifrons* or *Mandingoa nitidula*, which possibly extended their ranges northward, occur in riparian forest along rivers. These woodlands serve as corridors for species from the southern forest zone to penetrate northern regions, and the species mentioned above are often easily overlooked. Therefore, it is more likely that these had previously been overlooked in northern forest habitats than the larger or more open-savanna species, such as *Mycteria ibis*, *Ciconia abdimii*, *Phoeniculus aterrimus* or *Ortygospiza atricollis* and the swallows and swifts, recorded further south of their previous known ranges since 1985.

We consider that observations relating range extensions of species to climatic changes must be interpreted with caution[7]. Nevertheless, such observations in the tropics are sparse and the situation concerning faunal research is far below the standard of that in temperate regions, with a basic lack of information on species distribution. Therefore, analyses such as that presented here, though comparatively speculative, demonstrate the need for intensive monitoring of changes in species ranges and, in tropical regions, that range shifts are not only polewards[15].

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The Lake Chad Bird Migration Project: Malamfatori revisited

Ulf Ottosson[a], Christian Hjort[a] and Philip Hall[b]

Le bassin du lac Chad, situé en grande partie dans le Sahel, est un site important pour les migrateurs paléarctiques qui traversent le Sahara pour hiverner en Afrique occidentale et centrale. Un projet international, ayant pour objectif d'étudier le comportement et la condition physique des oiseaux migrateurs juste avant et après leur traversée du désert, a été mis en œuvre à Malamfatori, au Nigéria, sur la rive occidental du lac Chad, avec des participants venant de Suède, d'Allemagne, d'Angleterre, de Finlande et d'Italie. En février–mai et août–novembre 2000, et pendant un voyage de reconnaissance en avril 1999, 5.822 oiseaux, dont 3.982 migrateurs paléarctiques, ont été capturés, et leur mensurations, poids et niveau d'adiposité notés. L'analyse des données collectées est actuellement en cours et fera l'objet de publications sur la mue, la taxonomie et le zoogéographie des migrateurs. Pendant l'exécution du projet environ 300 espèces d'oiseaux ont été observées, dont huit étaient nouvelles pour le Nigéria. Ces dernières, qui seront documentées séparément, comprennent l'Aigle pomarin *Aquila pomarina*, l'Aigle des steppes *A. nipalensis*, l'Engoulevent doré *Caprimulgus eximius*, l'Engoulevent à collier roux *C. ruficollis*, la Rousserolle verderolle *Acrocephalus palustris*, la Prinia aquatique *Prinia fluviatilis*, le Cratérope fauve *Turdoides fulvus* et l'Étourneau caronculé *Creatophora cinerea.*

The Lake Chad basin, which is situated largely within the dry Sahel zone immediately south of the Sahara, is a major topographical feature of the northern savannas of Africa (Fig 1). The lake is of regional climatic significance and an important focal point for Palearctic migrants that cross the desert to winter in West and Central Africa. Many continue their migration south after refuelling in the Sahel, but these savannas are the final winter destination for millions of Palearctic breeders. Around Lake Chad species such as Ruff *Philomachus pugnax*, Yellow Wagtail *Motacilla flava*, Sand Martin *Riparia riparia* and Common Whitethroat *Sylvia communis* are, during periods of the European winter, as abundant as any resident African species, with the possible exception of Sudan Golden Sparrow *Passer luteus* and Red-billed Quelea *Quelea quelea*. The area surrounding the lake is of equal importance for northbound migrants in spring. Many species arriving from the south remain for some time to gain fat reserves (principally by taking saltbush *Salvadora persica* berries), before flying across the Sahara and the Mediterranean.

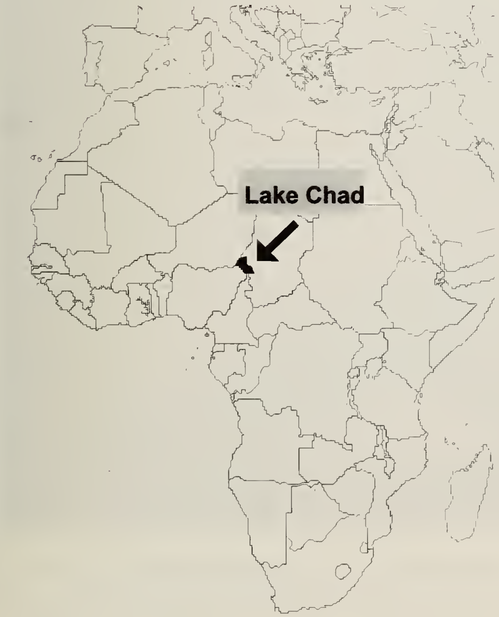

Figure 1. Map of Africa showing the position of Lake Chad

During recent years, partially under the European Science Foundation's 1994–96 network programme 'Spatio-temporal course, ecology and energetics of Western Palaearctic–African songbird migration'[3,4] much new work has been undertaken south of the westernmost Sahara, at Djoudj in Senegal[13,16,17,19] and at Ginak in The Gambia[11,12]. However, with the exception of field work performed in Ghana[5,10] and Nigeria[23] almost a decade ago, and some within the Sahara itself[1,2], there have been no recent bird migration studies in, or south, of the central Sahara.

During the concluding meeting of the European Science Foundation's network programme, held at Sempach in Switzerland, in February 1997, it was suggested that field work be undertaken along the central flyway. Stephen Rumsey (UK) and CH (Sweden), with support in Nigeria from A P Leventis and PH, agreed to undertake this. Reconnaissance trips were made in November–December 1997 and November 1998: the first surveyed the northern area between Kano and Lake Chad, the second concentrated on the area immediately west of Lake Chad.

During both reconnaissance trips the old fishery research station at Malamfatori, at the edge of the northern lake basin in extreme north-east Nigeria, was visited. In the late 1960s, this was the base for the British Ornithologists' Union (BOU) expeditions working on Palearctic migrants[6,8]. At that time, the station was on the lake's shore, but it is now surrounded by farmland at the edge of *Acacia* woodland, which colonised the area after the northern basin dried out during the drought of the 1970–1980s (Fig 2). Agricultural, rather than fisheries studies, are now the focus of the station.

Following the reconnaissance visits, it was decided to use Malamfatori as a base for bird migration studies, principally because of the abundance of *Salvadora* in the area and the available accommodation. A building was placed at our disposal by the Lake Chad Research Institute, which we renovated (Fig 3). The facilities include running (artesian) water and generator-driven electricity. The project also has two four-wheel-drive vehicles through the generosity of A P Leventis.

Spring 1999

During 1 to 26 April 1999 a pilot ringing study was initiated, to assess if the area around Malamfatori was still as suitable for such work as in the 1960s, especially given that the lake was now some distance away. This was undertaken by a team of Swedish, English and German ringers, and backed up by an Italian bird-ringing project performed simultaneously on several small islands in the central Mediterranean[15,18], in which Swedish effort has previously focused on the bird observatory on Capri[11].

In all 1,307 individuals were ringed at Malamfatori in April 1999, comprising 782 Palearctic migrants of 19 species and 525 individuals of resident African species. The dominant Palearctic migrants were Common Whitethroat (650 ringed), Sand Martin (60), Sedge Warbler *Acrocephalus schoenobaenus* (20) and Com-

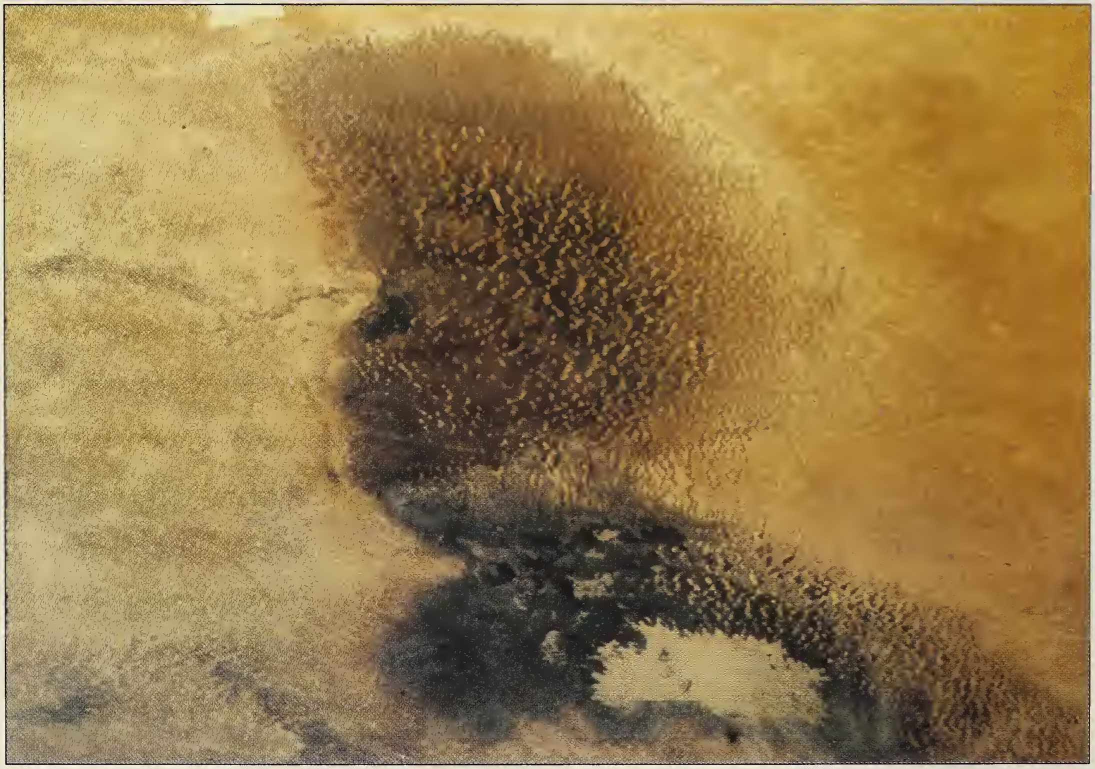

Figure 2. Lake Chad during its driest period, in the late 1970s, with water remaining in only the deepest parts of the southern basin, close to the Chari River mouth. The dark area shows the size of the lake at its greatest in the mid-1960s. The river entering the northern basin from the west is the Komadougu Yobe, which constitutes the border between Nigeria and Niger. Malamfatori lies at the edge of the lake basin just south of this river, and during spring 2000 water was only 2 km from its mid-1960s shoreline here. Note the sand dunes throughout the shallow basin, created during dry periods (Ulf Ottosson)

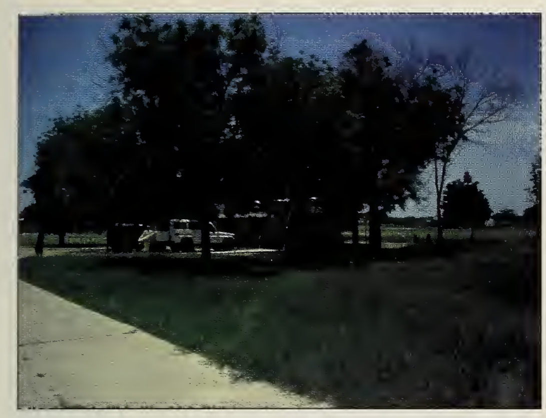

Figure 3. The bird observatory at the Lake Chad Research Institute compound south of Malamfatori (Ulf Uttosson)

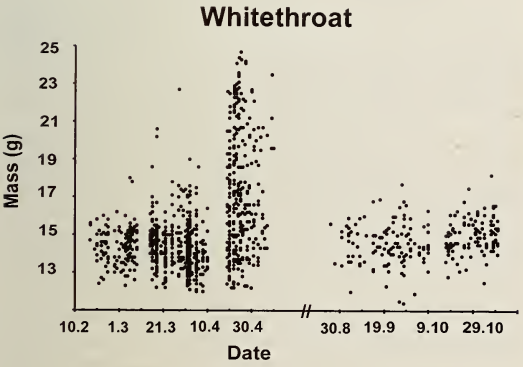

Figure 4. Body weights of Common Whitethroat *Sylvia communis* plotted against date.

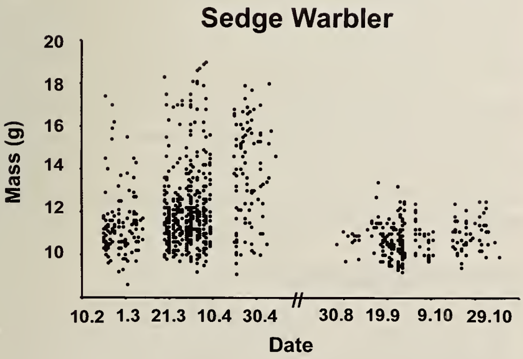

Figure 5. Body weights of Sedge Warbler *Acrocephalus schoenobaenus* plotted against date.

mon Redstart *Phoenicurus phoenicurus* (11). Common Whitethroats and Common Redstarts were caught among *Salvadora* bushes, the berries of which largely ripen during spring migration. Sand Martins were caught in mist-nets placed in the open, as they migrated on a broad front on most mornings. Sedge Warblers and several other water-dependent species were caught close to the advancing lake, c6 km from the station.

The main project 2000

It appears that rainfall is increasing again and because of this the water level in Lake Chad has been slowly rising; by spring 2000 the water was within 2 km of the old fishery station. Only 20 years before, in 1980, the lake was c120 km away (Fig 2); if this trend continues, the water may soon reach the old Malamfatori jetty.

The main field campaign of the Lake Chad Bird Migration Project was undertaken in 2000, in February–May and August–November, led by UO and Rolf Gustafsson (Sweden), and using personnel from Germany, Finland, Italy and Sweden. A total of 4,492

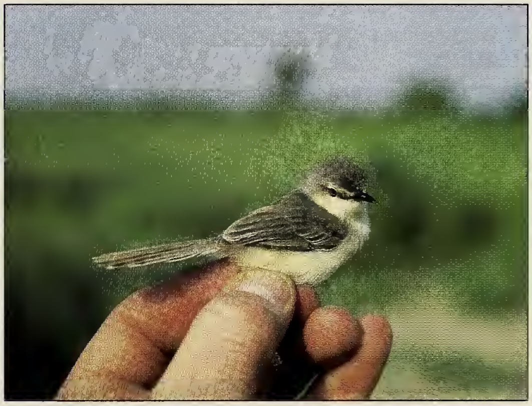

Figure 6. River Prinia *Prinia fluviatilis* (Ulf Ottosson)

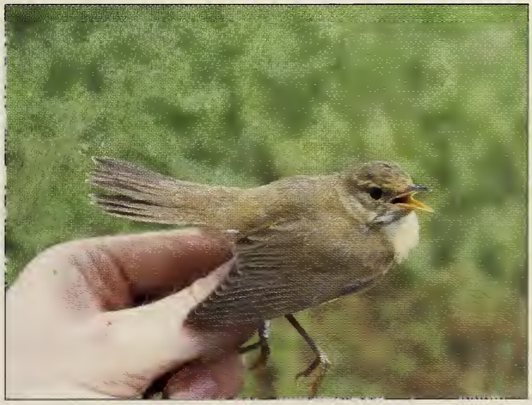

Figure 7. Marsh Warbler *Acrocephalus palustris*, Malamfatori, Nigeria, 16 September 2000 (Ulf Ottosson)

individuals was ringed, of which 3,200 were Palearctic migrants. Trapping was performed at both a dry site with *Salvadora* bushes and at a wet site near the rising lake. During spring, Common Whitethroats and Sedge Warblers were again the principal species caught and constituted almost 90% of Palearctic birds ringed. In autumn, species diversity was much greater, though Common Whitethroats and Sedge Warblers were still the most numerous (see Appendix 1).

The main aim was to study migratory ecology of trans-Saharan migrants with the improved methods of analysis currently available. Of particular interest was how birds fatten up in spring (berries, insects, physiological adaptation etc.) and the spatial pattern of departure by different species, age and sex groups. In autumn, we studied the sequence in which species arrive, how they restore fat reserves following the desert crossing, and when those not wintering in the Sahel proceed south. Much of this information is still unknown. Other areas of interest were the DNA characteristics of different populations of various species migrating through the area, and the diseases birds possess.

Results

Some data are currently under analysis, but others have been utilised in a number of publications. One study, by Waldenström & Ottosson[21], illustrates the difficulty in sexing Common Whitethroat. By comparing the sex determined by the ringer with that from DNA tests, it is demonstrated that many individuals are incorrectly sexed and that without DNA analysis such results would be wholly misleading. Another study by the same authors[22] demonstrates that winter moult of Common Whitethroat in Nigeria is intermediate between those patterns described for western and eastern races, and thus resembles the split-moult pattern described, for example, in Barred Warbler *Sylvia nisoria*[9] and could be interpreted as being halfway between a summer and winter moult. Further data analysis is being undertaken on fattening and preparation for trans-Sahara and Mediterranean flights, on stopover ecology, moult in both Palearctic and African species, bird malaria and population systematics. Figs 4–5 depict spring and autumn body masses for Common Whitethroat and Sedge Warbler. Winter weight of *Sylvia communis* is c13 g and individuals commence fat storage in March, completing this in April by which time body weight may have almost doubled. Winter weight of Sedge Warbler is c10 g and, as with Common Whitethroat, is almost doubled before spring departure.

Recoveries and retraps

Since the start of the programme, in 1999, there have been a surprising number of retraps of individuals ringed by our team and by others, as well as several recoveries. Of the 1,840 Common Whitethroats ringed, four have been recovered, in Tunisia, Libya, Egypt and Poland (the BOU expedition in the 1960s yielded two recoveries from Libya and one from Egypt[7]). Additionally, four ringed by us were retrapped at Malamfatori following at least one crossing of the Sahara. Of the 1,057 Sedge Warblers ringed, three controls were made of individuals ringed in Finland, Estonia and Hungary. Also, two Reed Warblers *Acrocephalus scirpaceus* were retrapped at Malamfatori, one from Yugoslavia and one from Italy. The latter was incredibly trapped by the same person who had originally ringed it, Ariele Magnani.

New birds to Nigeria

Given our intensive fieldwork over many months in an area subject to very little ornithological research during the past 25 years, it was unsurprising to discover several new species for Nigeria. Lake Chad lies at the border between West and East Africa, with their slightly different bird faunas, increasing the possibility of discovering species at the extremes of their range. At least eight additions to the Nigerian list were observed, some of which may even prove to be regular in the area (eg Steppe Eagle *Aquila* (*rapax*) *nipalensis* and Golden Nightjar *Caprimulgus eximius*), while River Prinia *Prinia fluviatilis* (Fig 6) is almost certainly resident. Two Marsh Warblers *Acrocephalus palustris* were caught (Fig 7); the species had only once previously been recorded in West Africa[7,20]. The other new species were Lesser Spotted Eagle *Aquila pomarina*, Red-necked Nightjar *Caprimulgus ruficollis*, Fulvous Babbler *Turdoides fulvus* and Wattled Starling *Creatophora cinerea*. Full details of these are to be published separately. Several Afrotropical species and Palearctic winter visitors are more common than previously considered, eg Ferruginous Duck *Aythya nyroca*, Long-legged Buzzard *Buteo rufinus*, Booted Eagle *Hieraaetus pennatus*, Grey-backed Fiscal *Lanius excubitoroides* and Black-headed Gonolek *Laniarius erythrogaster*. Also, species of a more easterly origin, such as Isabelline *Lanius isabellinus* and Masked Shrikes *L. nubicus* were recorded on several occasions.

Acknowledgements

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Appendix 1. Total numbers of birds ringed during the Lake Chad Bird Migration Project.

Taxon/Scientific name	April 1999	spring 2000	autumn 2000	Total
Common Whitethroat *Sylvia communis*	690	929	261	1880
Sedge Warbler *Acrocephalus schoenobaenus*		703	334	1037
Olivaceous Warbler *Hippolais pallida laeneni*	95	174	92	361
Reed Warbler *Acrocephalus scirpaceus*	1	129	24	154
Lesser Whitethroat *Sylvia curruca*		38	99	137
Beautiful Sunbird *Cinnyris pulchella*	39	35	40	114
Great Reed Warbler *Acrocephalus arundinaceus*	3	99	10	112
Sudan Golden Sparrow *Passer luteus*	72	17	23	112
Subalpine Warbler *Sylvia cantillans*		13	89	102
Red-billed Firefinch *Lagonosticta senegala*	60	17	17	94
Sand Martin *Riparia riparia*	60	28		88
Pygmy Sunbird *Hedydipna platura*	25	18	36	79
Garden Warbler *Sylvia borin*	4	15	50	69
Winding Cisticola *Cisticola gracilirostris*	4	33	28	65
Bleating Warbler *Camaroptera brachyura*	15	26	22	63
Yellow Wagtail *Motacilla flava* ssp.	6	40	9	55
Vitelline Masked Weaver *Ploceus velatus*	24	10	19	53
Wood Sandpiper *Tringa glareola*	9	40	2	51
African Reed Warbler *Acrocephalus baeticatus*	23	8	16	47
Black Scrub Robin *Cercotrichas podobe*	15	13	19	47
Lesser Swamp Warbler *Acrocephalus gracilirostris*		16	28	44
Rufous Scrub Robin *Cercotrichas galactotes*	7	11	21	39
River Prinia *Prinia fluviatilis*	1	26	12	39
Yellow Wagtail *Motacilla f. flava*		25	12	37
Melba Finch *Pytilia melba*	14	5	16	35
Northern Crombec *Sylvietta brachyura*	13	15	5	33
Blue-naped Mousebird *Urocolius macrourus*	18	2	13	33
Little Weaver *Ploceus luteolus*	16	5	10	31
Icterine Warbler *Hippolais icterina*	1	1	28	30
Little Stint *Calidris minuta*	3	24		27
Grey-headed Sparrow *Passer griseus*	7	11	9	27
Black-billed Wood Dove *Turtur abyssinicus*	8	12	7	27
Yellow Wagtail *M. f. feldegg*		22	4	26
Black-headed Weaver *Ploceus melanocephalus*		11	14	25
Red-billed Quelea *Quelea quelea*	7	11	7	25
Common Redstart *Phoenicurus phoenicurus*	12	3	9	24
Red-cheeked Cordon-bleu *Uraeginthus bengalus*	7	5	10	22
Orange-cheeked Waxbill *Estrilda melpoda*	4	10	7	21
African Collared Dove *Streptopelia roseogrisea*	2	1	18	21
Ethiopian Swallow *Hirundo aethiopica*	7	11	1	19
Zitting Cisticola *Cisticola juncidis*	1	12	5	18
Willow Warbler *Phylloscopus trochilus*	5	6	6	17
White-rumped Seedeater *Serinus leucopygius*	6		11	17
Black-headed Gonolek *Laniarius erythrogaster*	1	10	4	15
Savi's Warbler *Locustella luscinioides*		11	4	15
Namaqua Dove *Oena capensis*		3	12	15
Cricket Warbler *Spiloptila clamans*	7	4	4	15
White-billed Buffalo Weaver *Bubalornis albirostris*		3	11	14
Northern Red Bishop *Euplectes orix*			14	14
Northern Wheatear *Oenanthe oenanthe*		4	10	14
Greater Painted Snipe *Rostratula benghalensis*		14		14
Laughing Dove *Streptopelia senegalensis*	6	4	4	14
Olivaceous Warbler *Hippolais pallida opaca*		10	3	13
Golden Oriole *Oriolus oriolus*	12		1	13
Wryneck *Jynx torquilla*		2	10	12
White-throated Bee-eater *Merops albicollis*			12	12
Village Weaver *Ploceus cucullatus*			12	12
Senegal Coucal *Centropus senegalensis*	5	6		11
Yellow-crowned Bishop *Euplectes afer*			11	11
Vieillot's Barbet *Lybius vieilloti*	6	4	1	11
Yellow Wagtail *M. f. thunbergi*		6	5	11
Hoopoe *Upupa epops*	2	2	7	11
Woodchat Shrike *Lanius senator*	1	3	6	10
Cut-throat *Amadina fasciata*		2	7	9
Nightingale *Luscinia luscinia*			9	9
Turtle Dove *Streptopelia turtur*			9	9
African Silverbill *Lonchura malabarica*	2	1	5	8
Bush Petronia *Petronia dentata*	3	3	2	8
Greater Blue-eared Starling *Lamprotornis chalybaeus*			7	7
Black-crowned Tchagra *Tchagra senegala*	3	4		7
Little Rush-Warbler *Bradypterus baboecala*			6	6
Long-tailed Nightjar *Caprimulgus climacurus*			6	6
Didric Cuckoo *Chrysococcyx caprius*		1	5	6
Grey Woodpecker *Dendropicos goertae*	3	2	1	6
Black-rumped Waxbill *Estrilda troglodytes*			6	6
Crested Lark *Galerida cristata*		5	1	6
Red-backed Shrike *Lanius collurio*			6	6
Common Bulbul *Pycnonotus barbatus*	1	1	4	6
African Mourning Dove *Streptopelia decipiens*	4		2	6
Village Indigobird *Vidua chalybeata*	4		2	6
Chestnut-backed Sparrow Lark *Eremopterix leucotis*	1		4	5
Gabar Goshawk *Micronisus gabar*	1	1	3	5
Spur-winged Plover *Vanellus spinosus*	2	3		5
Little Bittern *Ixobrychus minutus*		3	1	4
Bluethroat *Luscinia svecica*		4		4
Speckle-fronted Weaver *Sporopipes frontalis*			4	4
Richard's Pipit *Anthus novaesseelandiae*		3		3
Kittlitz's Plover *Charadrius pecuarius*		3		3
Fan-tailed Widowbird *Euplectes axillaris*			3	3
Chestnut-bellied Starling *Lamprotornis pulcher*			3	3
Southern Grey Shrike *Lanius meridionalis*	1		2	3
Singing Bush Lark *Mirafra cantillans*	2	1		3
Wood Warbler *Phylloscopus sibilatrix*			3	3
Orphean Warbler *Sylvia hortensis*		1	2	3
Sahel Paradise Whydah *Vidua interjecta*			3	3
Shikra *Accipiter badius*			2	2
Marsh Warbler *Acrocephalus palustris*			2	2
Abyssinian Roller *Coracias abyssinica*		1	1	2
Barn Swallow *Hirundo rustica*	1		1	2
Tawny-flanked Prinia *Prinia subflava*			2	2
Blackcap *Sylvia atricapilla*	1		1	2
Green Sandpiper *Tringa ochropus*		2		2
Greater Swamp Warbler *Acrocephalus rufescens*		1		1
Tree Pipit *Anthus trivialis*			1	1
Temminck's Stint *Calidris temminckii*		1		1
Klaas's Cuckoo *Chrysoccocyx klaas*			1	1
Desert Cisticola *Cisticola aridulus*		1		1
Black Heron *Egretta ardesiaca*	1			1
Black-shouldered Kite *Elanus caeruleus*		1		1
African Rock Bunting *Emberiza tahapisi*			1	1
Common Kestrel *Falco tinnunculus*			1	1
Grey-headed Kingfisher *Halcyon leucocephala*			1	1
Masked Shrike *Lanius nubicus*			1	1
Isabelline Shrike *Lanius isabellinus*		1		1
Standard-winged Nightjar *Macrodipteryx longipennis*			1	1
Carmine Bee-eater *Merops nubicus*			1	1
Little Green Bee-eater *Merops orientalis*	1			1
Gambaga Flycatcher *Muscicapa gambagae*			1	1
Spotted Flycatcher *Muscicapa striata*			1	1
Ruff *Philomachus pugnax*	1			1
Black Wood-Hoopoe *Phoeniculus aterrimus*	1			1
Bonelli's Warbler *Phylloscopus bonelli*			1	1
Whinchat *Saxicola rubetra*	1			1
Marsh Sandpiper *Tringa stagnatilis*		1		1
Barn Owl *Tyto alba*	1			1
Totals	1,359	2,763	1,700	5,822

On the track of the African storks

P.A. Whittington and L.G. Underhill

Une petite population de Cigognes blanches *Ciconia ciconia* niche en Afrique du Sud en quatre localités depuis les années 1930. Contrairement aux Cigognes blanches européennes, les nicheuses sud-africaines restent toute l'année dans les environs de leur lieu de nidification. Ceci n'est toutefois pas les cas de leur progéniture. Afin de découvrir où les jeunes vont, cinq oisillons du Cap occidental ont été munis de balises Argos, permettant de les suivre par satellite, en décembre 2000. Fin janvier 2001, les cinq jeunes avaient quitté l'Afrique du Sud. En février, quatre d'entre eux trouvaient la mort, respectivement au Botswana, en Zambie et au Zimbabwe (deux), dans la zone qui subissait l'effet des grosses pluies du bassin du Zambèze qui provoquèrent des inondations catastrophiques au centre du Mozambique. Le cinquième se trouvait dans le sud du Mozambique pendant cette période; il s'est déplacé vers le nord-est du Zimbabwe en mars; le 5 mai il s'est dirigé brusquement vers le nord, traversant la Zambie en direction de la République Démocratique du Congo.

It is well known that White Stork *Ciconia ciconia* breeds in Europe and south-west Asia and migrates to Africa for the northern winter. Most take advantage of the narrowest sea crossings, passing south over Gibraltar or Thrace in August–September. Storks begin to arrive in Zimbabwe from around October, then slowly move south, reaching the Western Cape of South Africa in November–December[1,2]. These birds do not breed in southern Africa. However, there is a missing piece in the jigsaw of the White Stork story.

One pair nested near Oudtshoorn, 400 km east of Cape Town, in the 1930s and in 1940[2]. Since 1961, up to four pairs have bred in the Bredasdorp region, 200 km east of Cape Town and very close to the southern tip of Africa at Cape Agulhas. In the early 1970s, some of the eggs from these nests were taken to Tygerberg Zoo and the chicks artificially reared. In 1975, wild storks began building a nest on one of the zoo's cages. They were unsuccessful that year, but by 2000 five pairs of free-flying White Storks were nesting on various cages of the zoo, fours pairs having large chicks by early December. Homeyr[3] has published an historical overview of White Stork breeding in the Western Cape.

Unlike those storks that breed in Europe, the South African breeders appear to remain in the vicinity of the nest site year-round. However, their offspring do not. The question is 'where do these young storks go'? Some clues have derived from ringing chicks at the Bredasdorp nests. Two of the chicks in a 1961 nest were found dead farther north in Africa: one in Free State, South Africa, and the other close to the Zambia–Tanzania border. But, the full story remained to be discovered.

With this in mind, a team of ornithologists from the Max Planck Institute, Germany, and BirdLife Belgium travelled to Cape Town in November 2000 to place satellite transmitters on five White Stork fledglings in the Western Cape. Four of the transmitters were placed on nestlings in nests above the cages at the Tygerberg Zoo, and one was attached to one of the nestlings in the only nest near Bredasdorp in 2000. As part of a collaborative project with the Avian Demography Unit (ADU) at the University of Cape Town, the team hoped to unravel the mystery of what happens to these birds after they leave the nest. The mammalian inhabitants of the zoo watched bemused as an ornithologist climbed up a ladder, carefully took a chick from the nest and brought it into the shade. Here, a lightweight solar-powered satellite transmitter was fitted by means of a harness. Each chick was also fitted with a metal ring on one leg and a colour ring, with a clearly discernible number, on the other. The latter can be read in the field with binoculars. Those chicks that were not satellite tagged were marked with a patch of yellow picric dye on one wing. The chicks remained remarkably docile during the entire performance, permitting their wings, bill and tarsi to be measured. They were then returned to their nests, to the relief of their bill-clapping parents.

Before the birds left the nest we wrote: 'Mortality among young birds is high and it is possible that some, or all, of the young birds may die before moving very far. However, any that do survive will help to solve the puzzle of what happens to White Storks, born and bred in South Africa'.

But we were lucky, all five fledged successfully. During late December 2000 and early January 2001, the signals indicated that they had left their nests and were making short-distance trips into neighbouring areas. By 21 January 2001 all were outside the borders of the Western Cape and by the end of the month they were all outside South Africa. They had survived the critical first few weeks and we breathed a little easier. But, a bit too soon. We had reckoned without the rains over the Zambezi River valley in February 2001, which brought devastating floods to Mozambique.

'Tiger' set out from Tygerberg Zoo on 8 January and by 27 January was in the Luangwa Valley in north-east Zambia, some 4,000 km away. It spent nearly two weeks there, the daily satellite positions being from different places within the valley. Pete Leonard, one of Zambia's leading birders, reported: 'The area is not densely populated with people. The valley has rolling hills covered in scrub and poor miombo woodland until you hit the escarpments on either side and get into decent woodland. The storks make use of the oxbows on the main river but are probably more often on the smallish floodplains along the tributaries'.

We do not know if 'Tiger' made this journey in the company of adult White Storks returning to Europe, but this appears likely. If the storks had continued travelling north at the speed they had been travelling, they would have arrived in Europe while it was still winter there. The Luangwa Valley is probably one of the feeding areas they use en route, and where they remain for a few weeks before moving on.

By early February, siblings 'Misty' and 'Leo' were both in the vicinity of the Kariba Dam, on the Zambezi River between Zimbabwe and Zambia, while 'Rembrandt' was in Botswana and 'Saturn' in the Save River floodplain in southern Mozambique. Then the rains came and regular signals were received only from 'Misty' and 'Saturn'. This was not cause for alarm because sunny conditions are needed to power the solar transmitters and signals transmitted to the satellites do not easily penetrate thick cloud or rain. Suddenly, on 28 February, the 'activity counter' in 'Misty's' satellite tag became stuck on 166, indicating that this bird was definitely dead. Towards the end of April the dreaded letter from Zambia arrived. Arthur Zyambo had found satellite transmitter no. 20527 on a dead and half-eaten stork on the banks of the Luangwa River during February. This was (or had been) 'Tiger'. 'Leo' and 'Rembrandt' are almost certainly also dead. Having surmounted the hurdle of the first few weeks out of the nest, and having covered over 2000 km, it was disappointing that four out of five birds were lost in such a short period of time. But these are the realities of life for White Storks, and for most wild animals

By mid-May, only 'Saturn' remains alive. On 13 March, this bird crossed from Mozambique into the eastern highlands of Zimbabwe. It spent a month in the vicinity of Harare, in north-east Zimbabwe and we anticipated that it would spend the rest of the southern winter there. Suddenly, on 5 May, 'Saturn' got itchy wings and headed north. It made hops of c200 km per day and within a week had crossed Zambia and was just south of the equator in the Democratic Republic of Congo, near the shores of Lake Tanganyika. Its progress will continue to be reported on the ADU website http://www.uct.ac.za/depts/stats/adu.

We are still digesting what we have learnt. The biggest surprise was that the birds left their nest areas so early. We had expected them to head north at the time we believe the European breeders migrate, in late February–March. We were surprised at the long distances flown each day and that the birds followed such direct routes; all except 'Saturn' were taking the 'stork highway' to Europe, determined by a decade of satellite tracking of Northern Hemisphere birds. This is what makes us believe they were in the company of adults returning to Europe. This year, the main route took the birds into a hostile weather system, and the only individual to survive was that which initially took the unorthodox route through the Kruger National Park to Mozambique.

The Vogelwarte Radolfzell of the Max Plank Institute in Germany has been so intrigued by the results that they intend repeating the exercise in the coming breeding season. So keep watching the ADU website.

Acknowledgements

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Treasure beneath the waves

P.A. Whittington

En juin 2000, le pétrolier *Treasure* faisait naufrage au large de l'Afrique du Sud, à c25 km du Cap. Environ 900 tonnes de mazout furent déversées en mer, menaçant 40% de la population du Manchot du Cap *Spheniscus demersus* sur les îles avoisinantes Robben et Dassen. L'espèce, dont les effectifs ont diminué de 90% au cours du vingtième siècle, figure actuellement comme 'Vulnérable' sur la Liste Rouge de BirdLife International. Un important plan de sauvetage fut lancé, comprenant l'acheminement de 19.000 manchots vers des centres de réhabilitation sur le continent pour y être nettoyés, et le déménagement de 19.500 autres pour éviter qu'ils soient mazoutés. L'opération a été couronnée de succès, près de 90% des oiseaux mazoutés ayant été nettoyés et relâchés. Des études faites à la suite des marées noires précédentes indiquent que des Manchots du Cap nettoyés ont des chances de survie égales à ceux qui n'ont jamais été mazoutés, et qu'ils sont capables de nicher avec succès par la suite.

The July 2000 newsletter of the Southern African Foundation for the Conservation of Coastal Birds (SANCCOB) commenced with the words 'The SANCCOB centre is experiencing a quiet period…'. By the time the newsletter had reached its members, SANCCOB was heavily involved with the worst oil spill to hit southern Africa, and was up to its eyeballs in oiled penguins!

It began when a fully laden bulk-ore carrier, ironically named *Treasure*, reported flooding in one of its holds, off the west coast of South Africa. Weather conditions were such that the damage could not be fully assessed at sea, and the ship was permitted to come inshore to Table Bay, close to Cape Town[1]. An inspection revealed the true extent of the damage: a hole the size of a three-storey building below the waterline! An ultimatum to remove the fuel from the ship's tanks by noon on 22 June could not be met, and a decision was taken to tow the ship back out to sea, as it represented a major pollution hazard. The latter was borne out when the tow wire disconnected and the ship began drifting back towards the coast, sinking in 50 m of water just 8 km from Koeberg Power Station, at 03.00 hrs on 23 June. The ship was carrying 140,000 tonnes of ore and over 1,300 tonnes of fuel oil[2].

Oil began to escape almost immediately. The ship sank in a very sensitive area for seabird colonies. Dassen Island held the largest breeding colony of African Penguin *Spheniscus demersus* in 2000, and is just 48 km to the north. Robben Island, with the third largest African Penguin colony and the third largest Bank Cormorant *Phalacrocorax neglectus* colony in South Africa, is c15 km to the south. The resulting oil slick was well within the foraging area of birds from Robben Island and probably within range of those from Dassen Island. Worse was to come. On 25 June, the boom protecting Robben Island from the drifting oil slick broke. Oil reached the beaches that virtually all the penguins in the colony must use when moving to and from the sea. There was a realistic chance that the island's estimated 16,000 African Penguins would all be oiled. It was also the peak of the breeding season on both Robben and Dassen islands.

The rescue mission began on Robben Island the day after the ship had sunk with collection of oiled penguins for cleaning. Once the birds' landing beaches had become covered in oil, it became necessary to catch as many of the birds as possible, oiled or not, to try and keep the number of oiled birds needing treatment to a minimum. Uncharacteristically for June, Cape Town's weather remained calm and warm with temperatures reaching the mid-20°Cs on some days. With little wind to break it up, the slick drifted north with the Benguela current towards Dassen Island. The number of oiled birds arriving on the beaches of that island increased, and plans were put into place to fence off part of the penguin colony, thus preventing non-oiled individuals from entering the sea and the oil. Two days later, a decision was taken to evacuate as many of these birds from the island as possible.

While the oil spill affected several bird species, it was African Penguin that bore the brunt. Penguins from Robben Island were taken by boat to Cape Town and then by road, the oiled birds going to SANCCOB's cleaning facilities. The 7,000 non-oiled penguins that were evacuated were initially taken to a nearby research aquarium. From here, they were trucked overnight to Port Elizabeth, c800 km to the east of Cape Town. Penguins from Dassen Island were transported by boat or helicopter. Over the course of three days, 12,345 non-oiled penguins were evacuated from Dassen Island and taken to Port

Elizabeth in three-tiered sheep lorries. The oiled birds were taken by road to SANCCOB's cleaning station in Table View, Cape Town.

The total number of non-oiled evacuees was 19,536. But why take them to Port Elizabeth? It was known, from past experience, that cleaned birds previously released on Robben Island, had swum back to their colonies in Algoa Bay (where Port Elizabeth is situated) and that the fastest one to do so had taken 11 days. The plan was to give the authorities time to clear the oil before the birds could swim back to their breeding colonies near Cape Town. It was not practical to keep and feed so many birds in captivity. By releasing them far from their colonies it would buy the time needed to clear the oil and allow the birds to feed naturally on their way back. Three birds (one from Robben Island, two from Dassen Island) were fitted with satellite transmitters enabling progress to be monitored. Their positions were plotted daily on the Avian Demography Unit website and the world held its breath as the three, new media celebrities (Peter, Percy and Pamela) covered the 800 km marathon. All three escaped the attention of hungry sharks and seals and returned safely to their islands (where Pamela was actually discovered to be a male!). There were only 241 known casualties from this exercise, just over 1% of the total number of evacuees.

Prior to the sinking of the *Treasure*, the worst oil spill to affect South Africa was caused by the sinking of another bulk-ore carrier, the *Apollo Sea*, which went down on 20 June 1994, exactly six years and three days before *Treasure*'s demise. The *Apollo Sea* sank close to Dassen Island and resulted in the oiling of 10,000 African Penguins[3]. The number of oiled penguins collected after the *Treasure* sank reached 19,000, nearly double that of the previous incident. This far exceeded the number that SANCCOB's facilities could cope with and a satellite station was needed. The unlikely locality chosen was a disused railway warehouse in Salt River, near the city centre. It was soon transformed into a rehabilitation centre for c15,500 oiled penguins, with 328 plastic swimming pools and 64 artificial dams utilising 5,760 tons of sand! The old railwaymen's washrooms were converted into a penguin washing and rinsing unit, processing over 500 penguins a day. Thousands of volunteers, both at Table View and Salt River, devoted their time and energy to wash, rinse, feed and get bitten by penguins. They came from all over the world: joining the thousands of volunteers from South Africa were experts and helpers from the USA, UK, Australia, France, Canada and Brazil to name but a few. The result was scarcely thought possible at the beginning of the spill. By late August, the Salt River operation had closed: most of the penguins had already been released back to the wild. By early October, over 16,000 penguins had been cleaned and had regained their freedom. The death toll was below 2,000, 10.3% of the total number known to have been oiled. This compares with a 50% death toll following the *Apollo Sea* incident. Only c130 individuals were thought to have died in the field.

But what of all the abandoned nests on the islands? Unfortunately, thousands will have come to grief, although many pairs, on Dassen Island in particular, had already fledged their chicks. Approximately 3,000 of the larger chicks were taken from the islands and hand-reared at various points between Cape Town and Durban. Ninety percent of these survived to be released.

So a major disaster, that threatened 40% of the African Penguin population, was minimised due to a major international effort involving several organisations and thousands of caring individuals. But what happens to these birds after they are returned to the wild? In research following the *Apollo Sea* oil spill, 73% of released individuals returned to breeding colonies and were detected within five years[4], and a minimum of 28% was known to have survived into a fifth year following the spill. The individuals were also found to be capable of breeding successfully, achieving similar success to non-oiled birds after two years following the spill (A C Wolfaardt pers comm).

While the *Treasure* operation can be deemed a success, it emphasises the need to minimise the risk of a similar event happening again, perhaps by strengthening legislation and stricter enforcement of existing laws relating to marine traffic. In the meantime, the challenge will be to prepare for the next spill.

Acknowledgements

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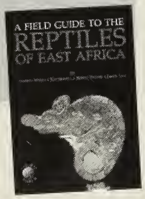

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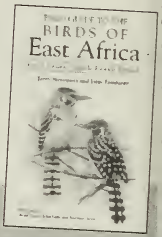

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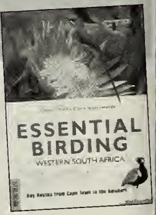

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Short Notes

Leach's Storm-Petrel *Oceanodroma leucorhoa* breeding in South Africa

P.A. Whittington[a], B.M.Dyer[b] and L.G. Underhill[a]

En 1995, une petite population d'Océanites cul-blancs *Oceanodroma leucorhoa* a été découverte sur l'Île Dyer, Afrique du Sud. La nidification y a été confirmée en 1996 et la population d'environ 20 couples est restée stable depuis. L'espèce est présente, et est probablement nicheuse, sur deux autres îles proches du littoral sud-africain. Ceci constitue la première nidification confirmée de l'espèce en Afrique et dans l'hémisphère sud.

In October 1995, a small group of Leach's Storm-Petrel *Oceanodroma leucorhoa* was discovered on Dyer Island, off the south coast of South Africa[2,5]. The behaviour, occupation of suitable nest sites and capture of one with a well-developed brood patch, suggested that the species was breeding.

In November 1996, breeding was confirmed when an adult, occupying a cavity in a dry-stone wall, was found to be incubating an egg. At least 19 individuals were heard calling from the network of stone walls in the vicinity. In February 1997, the nest cavity was again examined and found to contain a chick, estimated to be 30–45 days old. The chick had a covering of down on its head and body, the wing-coverts were 'in pin' and the remiges and rectrices were well developed[4]. Indications were that it had fledged by mid-March. Chicks were heard calling in two other nest cavities during the February visit.

Between 1997 and 2000, the population has remained stable at c20 pairs, and breeding was again confirmed in 1998 and 1999. In February 1998, six nests, each with a chick, were located and two chicks were ringed[1]. Another two chicks were ringed in February 1999. In November 2000, nine adult Leach's Storm-Petrel were mist-netted and ringed, thus doubling the total number of adults of this species ringed in South Africa.

At least four adults were heard calling overhead at Dassen Island, off South Africa's west coast, in November 1996. At least two have been heard calling there at suitable nest sites in subsequent years. The species almost certainly breeds at this locality, though this requires confirmation. In October 2000, four Leach's Storm-Petrel were heard calling from likely nest sites in a stone wall at Jutten Island, also on the west coast, and a fifth site appeared to be occupied[3]. Previous searches of this stretch of wall at the same time of year and in similar weather conditions had failed to locate any Leach's Storm-Petrel.

These observations represent the first confirmed breeding of the species on the African continent and in the Southern Hemisphere.

Acknowledgements

The Western Cape Nature Conservation Board permitted access to Dyer and Dassen Islands and provided logistical support. The Marine and Coastal Management division of the Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism provided transport to the islands. South African National Parks kindly allowed access to Jutten Island.

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Black-backed Cisticola *Cisticola eximius* a new species for Tanzania

Thomas Gottschalk

L'auteur rapporte la découverte de la Cisticole à dos noir *Cisticola eximius* en Tanzanie. En janvier–juin 2000, pendant la saison des pluies, 57 individus, répartis sur 30 sites, ont été recensés dans le nord du Parc National du Serengeti. L'espèce a également été rencontrée en trois sites dans le corridor ouest et au sud de Seronera. Elle se trouvait le plus souvent dans les prairies luxuriantes à *Themeda*, hautes de 70–120 cm. Les raisons possibles de la découverte tardive de *C. eximius* en Tanzanie sont examinées. Les différences concernant la morphologie et le choix d'habitat des oiseaux observés dans le Serengeti par rapport à ce qui est mentionné dans la littérature sont indiquées.

During ornithological surveys in the north part of Serengeti National Park, a *Cisticola* not previously recorded in the country was identified. The first record of Black-backed Cisticola *Cisticola eximius* was made on 17 January 2000 at 02°31'S 34°51'E. This individual was perched on a small bush singing in the early morning. As it was not shy it was possible to obtain good views. Observed through 10 x 42 binoculars its structure and plumage appeared similar to that of Zitting Cisticola *Cisticola juncidis* but the tail was longer and the unmarked chestnut crown was obvious. Clearly visible was the cream-coloured eye-ring and supraloral stripe contrasting with the dark lores. The mantle was very dark brown, almost black streaked and the belly, chin and throat whitish with pale buff underparts. Its song was clearly different to other cisticolas heard in the park, including the flight song, which always contained the same repeated series of notes. The height at which the flight song was delivered varied greatly, from a high aerial cruise to just a few metres above the ground. It never wing-snapped in flight *contra Birds of Africa*[2]. In north Serengeti Black-backed Cisticola could be confused with Pectoral-patch *C. brunnescens* and Zitting Cisticolas, as all three are similar in size and all perform song flights. The song of *C. eximius* is not monotonous and sharp, like *C. juncidis*. Its repeated flight notes are softer, unlike the hard, dry and sometimes accelerating *tsip* calls of *C. brunnescens*. Also, the cruising flight of *C. eximius* is usually higher.

As the song of *C. eximius* is easily remembered, I discovered more of the species. Between 17 January and 5 June 2000 I obtained c30 records of *C. eximius* involving more than 57 individuals. The species appears to be common in the high grasslands in the north part of Serengeti, especially on both sides of the Mara River and north to the Kenyan border at Lamai (01°31'S–01°32'S 34°50'E–34°51'E), at 1,430 m. Three additional sightings in the park were further south, in the Western Corridor (02°16'S 34°28'E) at 1,330 m and south of Seronera (02°28'S 34°51'E) at 1,590 m. That at Seronera is the southernmost record ever. As the birds have a distinctive far-carrying song most of the records were made by call.

In the same habitat I noted Zitting Cisticola, Pectoral-patch Cisticola, Stout Cisticola *C. robustus*, Winding Cisticola *C. galactotes* and Croaking Cisticola *C. natalensis*, as well as Rufous-naped Lark *Mirafra africana*, Rosy-breasted Longclaw *Macronyx ameliae* and White-winged *Euplectes ardens* and Yellow-mantled Widowbirds *Euplectes macrourus*.

Discussion

In East Africa *C. eximius* is frequent at 2,100–2,400 m in north-west Ethiopia, rare in Eritrea and uncommon and local south of c10°N in Sudan[2]. While locally common at 900–1,500 m in Uganda, in Kenya the species was only formerly frequent in the south-west, at c1,200 m near Mumias and Yala, but no recent records are available[2,3]. There are no previous records from Tanzania[1–3].

In Kenya, Black-backed Cisticola was recorded in open short-grass meadows that were dry or seasonally flooded[3]. In Serengeti National Park only

Table 1. Measurements (in mm) of three individuals of Black-backed Cisticola *Cisticola eximius* trapped in mist-nets in April and June 2000. Blood samples were taken from the second and third individuals, which are retained by A J Helbig (Vogelwarte Hiddensee, Germany).

	Date	South	East	Bill	Tarsus	Tail	Overall length	Wing
1	15 April	01°29.947	34°50.122	9.0	18.6	33.7	103.5	49.0
2	3 June	01°30.674	34°49.053	9.8	20.35	28.6	98.5	48.0
3	3 June	01°30.674	34°49.053	9.2	18.85	31.4	98.5	48.0

a few individuals were recorded in short-grass meadows, which have recently been heavily grazed by ungulates. In such areas song was always given from a perch. Most were observed in mid-height grasses, c70–120 cm tall, occasionally on moist ground. The most widespread grass species were *Themeda triandra*, *Sporobolus fimbriatus* and *Chloris gayana*. North of the Mara River Black-backed Cisticola also uses 100–120 cm-high *Themeda* grassland with scattered *Acacia* (some up to 4 m tall). Small open-grassland patches within *Acacia* parkland were also utilised.

As several records of Black-backed Cisticola were made close to the Kenyan border the species may also be common in the southern Masai Mara, where habitats appear similar to those in Tanzania. It is surprising that so many records of the species were made in the wet season in Serengeti, given the relative lack of previous records from Tanzania or the Masai Mara. The records may result from a genuine expansion of the species' range or may be indicative of the relative lack of attention most observers pay cisticolas. Few ornithologists have visited the northern Serengeti as the roads are sometimes very bad, especially during the wet season, and because of problems with poachers.

Compared to the breeding males illustrated by Urban *et al*[2] and Zimmermann *et al*[3] those seen in Serengeti National Park had noticeably longer tails. Though the Serengeti birds were in breeding plumage their tail lengths matched illustrations of non-breeding individuals in Urban *et al*[2] and Zimmermann *et al*[3].

Additional research is required to determine if the small population of Black-backed Cisticola in north Tanzania will persist, given that the principal threat to the species' habitat is man-made fire.

Acknowledgements

I thank the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) for funding the field work and the Tanzania Commission for Science and Technology (COSTECH), Tanzania National Parks (TANAPA) and Tanzania Wildlife Research Institute (TAWIRI) for permission to work in Serengeti National Park. I gratefully acknowledge the assistance of F M Chalamila in the field and specially thank Barbara Hartmann for translating the French summary.

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The status of Isabelline Wheatear *Oenanthe isabellina* in Morocco

Valéry Schollaert[a] *and Gilles Willem*[b]

Cette note rapporte l'observation de neuf Traquets isabelles *Oenanthe isabellina* au Maroc, entre les 13 et 17 mars 2001. Ces données confirment la régularité, déjà soupçonnée, de l'espèce dans le pays. Ce traquet est vraisemblablement régulier en petit nombre dans le sud-est du Maroc, en février-mars, période pendant laquelle un passage prénuptial important est constaté en Algérie.

Between 13 and 17 March 2001, we birded arid areas of south-east Morocco, noting migrant passerines such as Northern Wheatear *Oenanthe oenanthe* and Willow Warbler *Phylloscopus trochilus*. For most species, it appears that individuals we saw were among the first to cross the Sahara that spring. The surprise was Isabelline Wheatear *Oenanthe isabellina*, which we recorded on several occasions with a total of nine individuals (see Appendix). We managed to take some photographs (see Fig 3) and all records have been submitted to the Moroccan Rare Birds Committee.

Isabelline Wheatear is considered an accidental visitor to Morocco[1]: the 19 previous records concern individuals between 25 January and 26 April, principally in February (six) and March (seven). All but five records are from the south-east of the country, with the others from West Saharan Morocco (P Bergier pers comm). Dufourny[2], who described two Isabelline Wheatears seen near Touroug (west of Erfoud), on 16 February 1993, considered the species as possibly regular as a spring migrant throughout south-east Morocco. Indeed, more regular occurrence of Isabelline Wheatear in Morocco during early spring

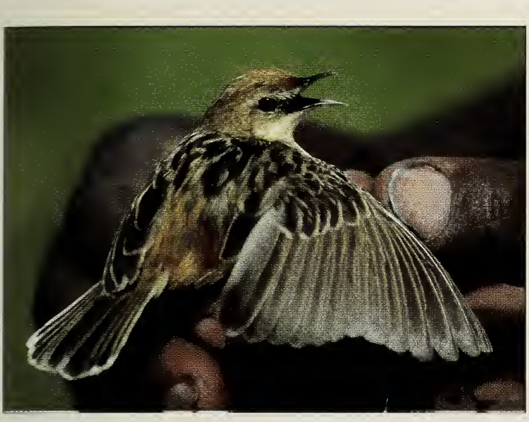

Figure 1. Black-backed Cisticola *Cisticola eximius*, northern part of Serengeti National Park, 15 April 2000 (Thomas Gottschalk)

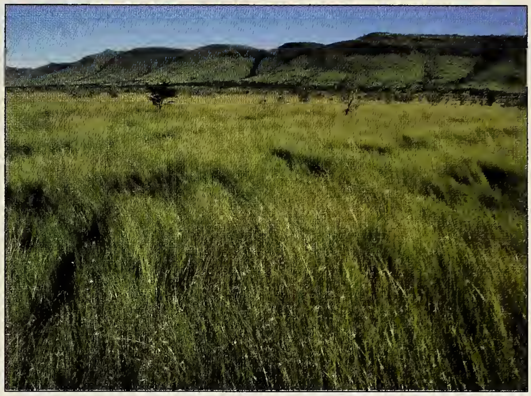

Figure 2. Habitat of Black-backed Cisticola *Cisticola eximius*; mid-height grassland with *Themeda triandra* and *Sporobolus fimbriatus*, northern part of Serengeti National Park, 5 June 2000 (Thomas Gottschalk)

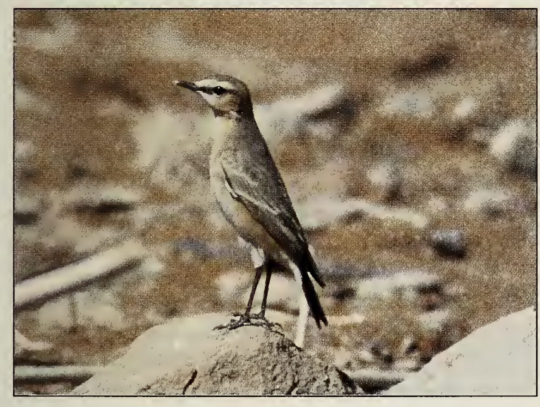

Figure 3. Isabelline Wheatear *Oenanthe isabellina*, Barrage Hassan Ad-Dakkhil, 17 March 2001 (Gilles Willem)

can be expected, as it appears to be a regular migrant in February–March in Algeria[3,4], and it winters west to Senegal and Mauritania. Our records confirm this expectation. The relatively low numbers previously recorded can be explained by the lack of ornithological activity in February–March. Indeed, most birders visit (or formerly did so) in December–January, notably in search of Slender-billed Curlew *Numenius tenuirostris*, and others come later in spring, to find summer migrants such as Blue-cheeked Bee-eater *Merops persicus*. It is also possible that Isabelline Wheatear crosses Morocco in a few days, and some are overlooked among high numbers of other comparatively similar species, such Northern and Desert Wheatears *Oenanthe deserti*.

With another record in 2000 (currently under consideration by the Moroccan Rare Birds Committee), there are now 26 records (involving 32 individuals) of Isabelline Wheatear in Morocco. The species can no longer be considered as an accidental visitor, but should be regarded as a regular, if scarce, spring migrant through the country.

Acknowledgements

We thank Guy Kirwan who encouraged us to write this note and suggested improvements to its draft, and Patrick Bergier who provided data on previous records in Morocco.

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Appendix: Isabelline Wheatears *Oenanthe isabellina* recorded in south-east Morocco, in March 2001 by the authors. Numbers in brackets indicate the number of individuals.

Ouarzazate, 13 March (one)
Alnif (between Tazzarine and Erfoud), 15 March (three)
Erfoud, 16 March (one)
Merzouga, 16 March (one)
Barrage Hassan Ad-Dakkihl (Errachidia), 17 March (one)
Rich (Between Errachidia and Midelt), 17 March (two)

First record of Cassin's Hawk-Eagle *Spizaetus africanus* for Kenya

William S. Clark[a] *and Carl Edelstam*[b]

Les auteurs examinent l'identification d'un spécimen de l'Aigle de Cassin *Spizaetus africanus*, collecté au Mont Elgon, Kenya, en avril 1926, et découvert au Musée de la Nature à Malmö, Suède. Bien que catalogué comme Aigle botté *Hieraaetus pennatus*, le plumage et les mensurations indiquent qu'il s'agit en fait d'un Aigle de Cassin juvénile. Ce spécimen constitue ainsi la première mention de l'espèce pour le Kenya.

In September 1997 WSC found a specimen of an eagle (Figs 4–5) in the Naturmuseer (Nature Museum) in Malmö, Sweden, that had been collected on Mt. Elgon, in 1926. It had been identified and labelled as a Booted Eagle *Hieraaetus pennatus* but does not have the appearance of that species. Following careful study and comparisons of plumage characters and measurements, we are convinced that it is a juvenile Cassin's Hawk-Eagle *Spizaetus africanus*. As such, it is the first record of the species from Kenya.

The specimen label reads: 'tag no. M. M. Kat.av exot nr. 1.1131 17 April 1926 Male Mt. Elgon. Collection of Dr. H. Granvik Expedition. Iris: Kaffe Braun Bill: Blue grey, 26 Wing: 345 Tail: 260 Tarsi: 83 mm Feet: Lemon yellow Cere: Lemon yellow Entire culmen: 35 mm.' CE re-measured the tail as 240 mm, not 260 mm as on the label.

Simon Thomsett provided us with the following quote from the trip report written by Dr Hugo Granvik, the collector: 'I am not sure about the identification of this specimen, because of the differences between it and all other specimens in the British Museum. As in *Accipiter melanoleucus*, the spots on the under surface [of this specimen] are very broad and almost oval, but in all other specimens [of *pennatus*] I have seen, the birds are striped and have no spots at all. In typical and true *pennatus* only the throat and chest are striped, whereas in my specimen the whole underside, the undertail-coverts and the tarsus are spotted.'

The specimen in question has tarsi feathered down to the toes, therefore it can only be one of the 'booted' eagles. It is not an *Aquila* or a Long-crested Eagle *Lophaetus occipitalis* because it is not overall dark. It is too small and has wings too short to be a Bonelli's *Hieraaetus fasciatus*, Crowned *Stephanoaetus coronatus* or Martial Eagle *Polemaetus bellicosus*, or African Hawk-Eagle *Hieraaetus spilogaster*. The only other possibilities are Booted Eagle, Ayres' (Hawk) Eagle *Hieraaetus ayresi*, or Cassin's Hawk-Eagle; all three have wing measurements similar to the specimen. Measurements of the specimen are longer than those of Booted Eagles for tarsi (83 vs 59–63 mm[2]) and tail (240 vs 186–204 mm[2]); further, the tail pattern (Fig 5) and breast markings (Fig 4) are different, as noted by Granvik. Juvenile Ayres' (Hawk) Eagle appears similar in plumage to the specimen, having a pale head and underparts, and a similar tail pattern; however, the tarsi (56–78 mm)[1] and tail (Table 1) of Ayres' (Hawk) Eagle are appreciably shorter. Additionally, the specimen lacks the white feathers at the base of the forewing possessed by both Ayres' (Hawk) Eagle and Booted Eagle. The only candidate, therefore, on both plumage characteristics and measurements, is juvenile Cassin's Hawk-Eagle. The mensural data in Table 1, taken by CE when preparing moult protocols for nine of the 11 museum specimens of Cassin's Hawk-Eagle known to him, support this identification, especially the 'Kipp index' or 'primary projection' and the wing/tail ratio, which are both within the range of Cassin's and outside that of Ayres' (Hawk) Eagle. The pale head, brown back and upperwing-coverts, and lack of black areas on the flanks of the specimen are juvenile characters of this species.

Table 1. Comparison of measurements (in cm) of the Malmö specimen with Ayres' Eagle *Hieraaetus ayresi* and Cassin's Hawk-Eagle *Spizaetus africanus*

	n	Wing	Wing tip*	Tail	Wing/tip*	Wing/tail
H. ayresi	17	37.4 (32–42)	13.5 (11.5–16.0)	19.4 (17–21)	2.7 (2.5–2.8)	1.9 (1.8–2.0)
S. africanus	10	34.8 (32–36)	10.2 (9–11)	23.5 (21–25)	3.4 (3.0–3.6)	1.5 (1.4–1.6)
Specimen		34.5	10	24	3.5	1.4

* n = 5, Cassin's and n = 9, Ayres

Cassin's Hawk-Eagle is resident in tropical rainforests of central and West Africa, ranging east to western Uganda[1,3]. Presumably this juvenile had wandered east to the forests (now gone) at the base of Mt. Elgon where it was collected. Photographs of the ventral and dorsal of this specimen have been deposited with the East Africa Natural History Society.

Acknowledgements

We thank the director of the Malmö Naturmuseer, Dr P G Bentz, for permission to examine and measure this specimen, S Thomsett for information from the field notes of Dr Granvik, and D Turner for confirming that the specimen was collected in the Kenyan part of Mt. Elgon.

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Bergeronnette citrine *Motacilla citreola* à Dakar: première mention pour le Sénégal

Christophe Gruwier[a], Stéphane Claerbout[b] et BrunoPortier[c]

We describe and document with photographs the first record of Citrine Wagtail *Motacilla citreola* in West Africa, near Dakar, in Senegal, from 16 to 29 January 1999. The individual was a first-winter female and probably overwintered at the locality. The observation is discussed in the light of the 12 previous records from continental Africa. Most have been in the north-east, with single records in Morocco and South Africa.

Le 16 janvier 1999, lors d'une visite au parc de Hann et de la 'Petite Niaye', située à l'est du Collège des Pères Maristes et le plus à l'ouest de l'ensemble Pikine-Dagoudane, Dakar, l'attention de CG est attirée par un cri de bergeronnette très râpeux. L'identification est immédiate au premier contact visuel; elle est confirmée par SC: il s'agit d'une Bergeronnette citrine *Motacilla citreola* femelle en plumage de premier hiver. Une description complète de l'oiseau est réalisée sur place. Le lendemain, l'oiseau est toujours présent et peut être photographié. Deux semaines plus tard, le 29 janvier, en compagnie de BP, l'oiseau est relocalisé sans aucune difficulté au même endroit, laissant supposer un hivernage complet.

Description

De taille similaire à la Bergeronnette printanière *Motacilla flava*, dont de nombreux individus, essentiellement des sous-espèces *flava* et *flavissima*, sont présents aux alentours. Les pattes noires sont légèrement plus longues donnant à l'oiseau un aspect 'haut sur pattes'. Un large sourcil jaune contourne les parotiques sombres, de couleur grisâtre, rejoignant l'espace sous-mustacien également jaune. Calotte gris perle (non olive comme chez *M. f. flavissima*) se fondant avec le manteau de même couleur, confirmant qu'il s'agit d'un individu femelle. Dos et croupion gris perle (olive chez *M. f. flavissima*). Queue sombre avec les rectrices externes blanches (similaire à celle de *M. flava*). Une barre alaire blanche (jaunâtre chez *M. f. flavissima*) sur les moyennes couvertures est nettement visible; elle n'est pas de dimension symétrique, indiquant un oiseau en mue. Une deuxième barre alaire moins distincte est visible au niveau des grandes couvertures. Tertiaires de couleur brunâtre frangées de crème, indiquant un individu de première année. Gorge et haut de la poitrine jaunes. Ventre et sous-caudales blanches (jaunâtres chez *M. f. flavissima*). Flancs grisâtres. Bec noir assez long, légèrement plus fort que chez *M. flava*. Œil noir.

Cri très râpeux, court et explosif pouvant être retranscrit par *tsîîrr*; très différent de celui des Bergeronnettes printanières types. Certaines *M. f. flavissima* émettent un cri pouvant rappeler celui de *M. citreola*, mais plus long, moins puissant et surtout moins râpeux.

Lors des trois visites, l'oiseau était toujours présent dans la même zone (à dix mètres près) et défendait son territoire en chassant vigoureusement les Bergeronnettes printanières, poussant son cri caractéristique à chaque poursuite. Il était, la plupart du temps, occupé à se nourrir.

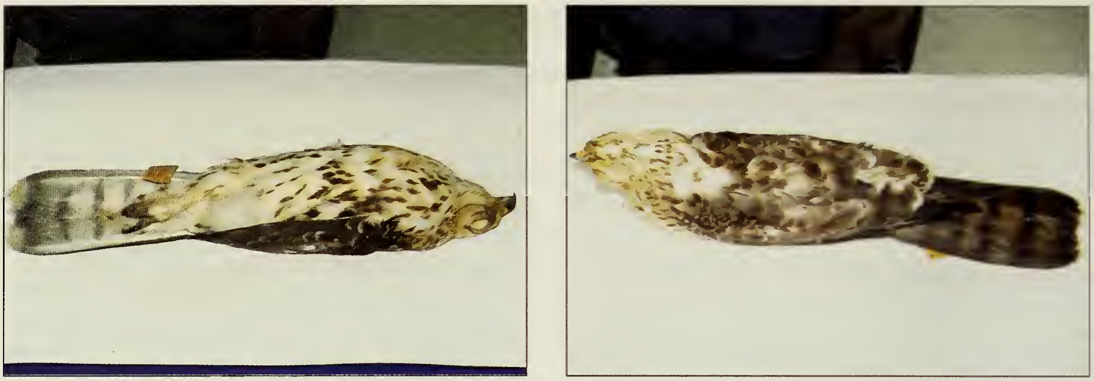
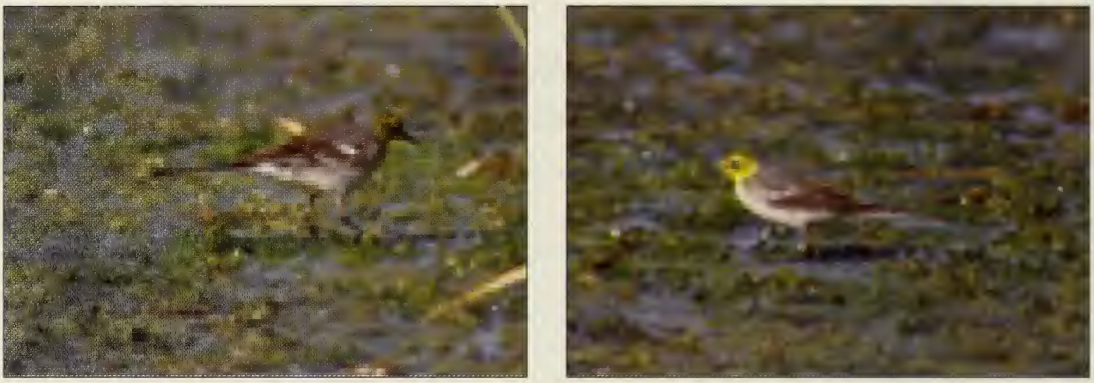


Figure 4–5. Views of specimen of Cassin's Hawk-Eagle *Spizaetus africanus* taken on Mt. Elgon, Kenya (William S. Clark)



Figures 6–7. Citrine Wagtail *Motacilla citreola*, Pikine-Dagoudane, Dakar, Sénégal, 16 janvier 1999 (Bruno Portier)

Discussion

La Bergeronnette citrine niche principalement en Asie et atteint la limite occidentale de sa distribution en Finlande et la Pologne. À l'automne, elle migre généralement vers l'est, Israël semblant être la limite occidentale de sa zone de migration, bien que de plus en plus d'individus soient observés en Europe de l'Ouest. Les quelques observations réalisées sur le continent africain proviennent d'Égypte (quatre), d'Éthiopie (quatre), de Djibouti (deux), du Maroc (une) et d'Afrique du Sud (une)[1–5]. L'observation de cette espèce au Sénégal constitue donc la première mention pour l'Afrique de l'Ouest et la seconde seulement pour la façade atlantique de l'Afrique, après celle du 3–5 janvier 1995 au Maroc[1]. Il est vraisemblable que cet oiseau ait fait route par l'Europe de l'Ouest et Gibraltar avant de s'arrêter près de Dakar où il effectuait apparemment un hivernage complet.

La 'Petite Niaye' est une zone humide où près de 140 espèces d'oiseaux auraient déjà été répertoriées (Sylla El Hadji comm pers). Depuis septembre 1998, toutefois, le site est en cours d'aménagement à des fins de développement urbain et disparaît un peu plus de jour en jour.

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Reviews

The Birds of Africa. Volume 6

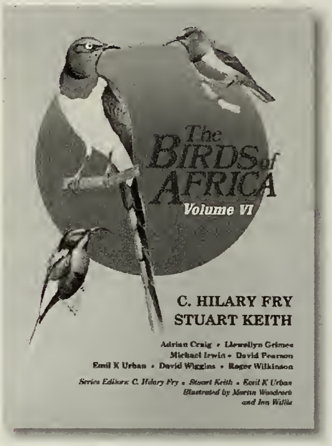
C. H. Fry, S. Keith and E. K. Urban (eds). 2000. xvii + 724 pp, 36 colour plates, numerous line drawings and distribution maps. Academic Press, Harcourt Place, 32 Jamestown Road, London NW1 7BY, UK. ISBN 0-12-137306-1. UK£115.00.

Six down, one to go! It is now 18 years since the first volume of this work appeared but only three since volume 5, a consequence, we are told, of the publishers 'having put their foot down and insisted that operations be accelerated.' Which is good news for all those who read this journal.

Volume 6 treats 19 families, from the Picathartidae to the Buphagidae, and in so doing covers, among others, the babblers, shrikes, sunbirds and starlings, 324 species in all. At 724 pages it is the largest volume yet, being some 50 pages longer than the previous one, which was the largest then produced. The greater size is not immediately apparent, however, because one of a number of innovations in this volume is a change in paper to a thinner, higher quality, gloss art paper that is a pleasure to handle. Different printers have been used, too, for both text and plates, resulting in a marked improvement, particularly in the quality of the plates, which are crisp and, I suspect, faithful to Martin Woodcock's original artwork. There have been changes, too, in the plate legends. The latest design, the third to be used, has the full page facing the plate now reproducing the plate itself, faintly and in black and white, across which pale pink overlays indicate to which illustrations the names printed in them apply. Whether this is more effective than the previous system, which showed mere silhouettes of the birds with grey overlays, I am unconvinced, but it is certainly more pleasing. Greater attention has been shown to the production of the distribution maps too. This hasn't resulted in any changes of design but is apparent in many cases—not all—in the precision with which ranges have been mapped. Rather than generous swathes of territory being covered in red, more effort has here been made to plot actual localities or well-defined areas, as appropriate, and show disjunct populations as being such.

All these improvements presumably ensue from the aforementioned increased downward pressure from the publisher's corporate foot, which has also resulted in changes in the editorial process for this volume. These see Stuart Keith assume responsibility for virtually all of the sections on 'voice' (treated at greater length in this volume) and 'field characters' while David Pearson has written most of the 'description' sections. The lion's share has, however, fallen to Hilary Fry who has compiled the remaining sections for most of the included species. As in previous volumes, the help of a number of specialists of particular groups has been called upon to compile some of the species accounts. These include, but are not limited to, Adrian Craig and Roger Wilkinson for some of the starlings and Michael Irwin, some of the sunbirds.

Martin Woodcock probably had to buy a entire new range of colours for his palette in order to illustrate this volume. At the very least it must have come as a welcome change, after the browns and greys of the previous volume (*Cisticola, Bradypterus, Acrocephalus, Muscicapa* etc.) to turn to sunbirds, bush-shrikes and starlings. The metallic colours of the sunbirds and starlings are often, it appears to me, among the hardest for artists to capture accurately or pleasingly. I think here, however, MW is to be congratulated on his sunbirds in particular, which are of an extremely high quality and amongst the best I have seen of this group. The only minor cavil I have is the, I suppose unavoidable, obligation to show the pectoral tufts. Field experience of the group can easily lead one to the impression that these are figments (pigments?) of artists' imaginations.



It is also a treat to be shown such confusing genera as *Illadopsis, Speirops* and *Dryoscopus* all on one plate for the first time, rather than to have to juggle two or more different books or, worse, to have to try to deduce the appearance of a bird from a series of statements which start with the words 'differs from the previous species in…', especially when the same formula of words also appears under the previous species!

From earlier volumes of *Birds of Africa* one has come to expect one or two taxonomic innovations in treatment of taxa and this one doesn't disappoint. The most obvious here is, I suppose, the (tentative) transfer of the Ethiopian Bush-Crow *Zavattariornis stresemanni* from the crows to the starlings. This on the basis of its similarities with the Wattled Starling *Creatophora cinerea*—size, proportions, stance, bare skin around the eye, foraging behaviour, nest structure and pearl-grey and black plumage. Others include the transfer of the Rosy-patched Shrike, conventionally placed in *Rhodophoneus,* to the bush-shrikes of the genus *Telophorus*, and splitting Red-billed Helmet-Shrike *Prionops caniceps* into two, with *rufiventris* (plus *mentalis*) from Lower Guinea being separated, as the Rufous-bellied Helmet-Shrike, from the Upper Guinea (including Nigeria) nominate form.

More extensive changes have, following work by Michael Irwin[1,2], been adopted in sunbird taxonomy. Recent 'conventional' treatment has been to ascribe all African sunbirds either to *Anthreptes* or, the majority, to *Nectarinia*. Irwin[1,2] has, on the basis of detailed studies of biological and morphological characters, including those of bill structure, proposed that African taxa hitherto placed in

Anthreptes be divided among three genera and those formerly in *Nectarinia* seven. To illustrate the changes with *Anthreptes*, removed from it to the genus *Hedydipna* are *collaris* (Collared), *platura* (Pygmy), *metallica* (Nile Valley) and *pallidigastra* (Amani), while Fraser's or Grey-headed Sunbird becomes *Deleornis fraseri*. The placement of *fraseri* within a monotypic genus does not seem at all unreasonable, as it does not behave like any other sunbird I know. As the anonymous author (*Deleornis* having apparently been omitted from the list of authorship on page vii) points out, its behaviour, which includes foraging as an insectivore within mixed-species flocks in forest understorey, is much more that of a warbler (Sylviidae) than a sunbird. This means that one is able to follow and watch it for relatively extended periods, something 'normal', volatile sunbird behaviour usually renders impossible.

At the species level, there are—thankfully—relatively fewer changes. However, the Olive Sunbird in West African forests that I have hitherto known as *Nectarinia olivacea*, here becomes *Cyanomitra obscura* because, in addition to being moved to this restored genus, it has been separated from the nominate form of eastern and southern Africa. Lastly, the Purple-banded Sunbird, here *Cinnyris bifasciata*, has been considered specifically distinct from the form *tsavoensis*, which is here raised to species level as the Tsavo Purple-banded Sunbird. This arrangement, admitted to be provisional, is made mainly on the basis of differences in the width of the eponymous purple band, broad in *bifasciata*, narrow or lacking in *tsavoensis*.

One further split to mention is the separation of the Velvet-mantled Drongo *Dicrurus modestus* (together with *coracinus* and *atactus*) of the Guineo-Congolian forests from the Common Drongo *D. adsimilis* of the surrounding savannas and beyond. In areas where two or three species are possible, I have always found the drongos a frustratingly difficult group to identify, an admission which has sometimes induced pitying looks from others. However, having examined the family account and plates here, I feel reassured—they still appear a group difficult to identify in the field! The number of taxonomic notes at the end of the description section stating that a form *may* belong to that species etc reinforces my belief, while the distribution map for Square-tailed Drongo *D. ludwigii*, in Upper Guinea at least, informs me that others do not find them so easy to identify either. The map indicates that *ludwigii* occurs throughout much of the forest zone of Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana and Nigeria. This is incorrect: *atripennis* is here the species of the forest interior while *ludwigii* is in galleries etc skirting true forest. This is also an instance of where the text and map do not coincide; the map would have us believe that *ludwigii* occurs throughout Ghana, except the extreme north, whereas the text states only that it is 'local and common in S Ghana, north to Yegi, sporadic Mole Game Reserve'.

Another error is in the account of Monteiro's Bush-Shrike *Malaconotus monteiri*. Here, Eddie Williams' recent suggestion[3] that *M. monteiri* and *M. gladiator* may be conspecific isn't really given a fair shake, I feel, probably in part because he has been misquoted. The species account states that he found *M. monteiri* in the Bakossi Mountains of Cameroon when the point was he didn't! The birds he saw were *M. gladiator*, but their calls were those attributed hitherto to *monteiri*.

This error was noted partially because Williams' purported observation of *M. monteiri* in Bakossi in the 'Range and Status' section is referenced. Which raises the question, why are some such localities here so referenced and others not? Another question, what determines the sequence of subspecies treatment in the 'Description' section? It appears to be neither geographic, alphabetic nor, as the nominate is not always the first, historical. I think we should be told.

However much the editors have striven to avoid omissions and inaccuracies (another example of the latter is the eye colour of the gonoleks which, in *Laniarius mufumbiri* and *L. erythrogaster* at least, is shown in the plate as being too yellow; it should be white or nearly so), these are inevitable in a work of this scale and one which covers what remains, for the most part, a very imperfectly known avifauna. Consider, after all, how many iterations it has taken guide books of the birds of Europe to achieve a level of accuracy with which the majority of informed and demanding users are happy. It is no surprise therefore that one can here find fault in places (and so provide stimuli for further investigation, advances in understanding and papers to this journal!). It would, however, be very wrong to dwell on these and thereby ignore or denigrate the enormous amount of scholarship, skill, determination, expertise and sheer hard work that has gone into the production of this book. It is stunning and absolutely essential for anyone with a serious interest in the subject. My congratulations to all concerned and let's have Volume 7 no later than 2003, please. The trouble is, as a result of the time interval and the increase in standards and depth of coverage as the series has progressed, Volume 1 is now looking seriously outdated and outclassed.

L. D. C. Fishpool

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Sounds of Seychelles—Fauna of the Granitic Islands

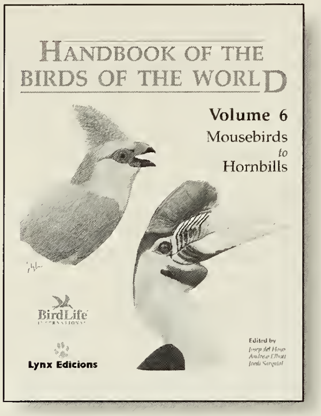
Gérard Rocamora and Aurora Solé

Sounds of Seychelles—Soundscapes of the Granitic Islands

Aurora Sole and Gilles Abbé. 2001. UK£15 each incl. p&p or UK£28 for two-CD set from Nature des Iles Pty Ltd, PO Box 1059, Mahé, Seychelles (www.seychelles.net/space95/sos_site/). Also available from Wildsounds, Cross Street, Salthouse, Norfolk NR25 7XH.

Fauna of the Granitic Islands is likely to be of most interest to birders as its 51 tracks include the vocalisations of all the endemic bird species found on the granitic Seychelles islands. Calls of introduced landbirds and a selection of seabirds, amphibians and invertebrates are also included. *Soundscapes of the Granitic Islands* comprises 14 longer cuts of ambient soundscapes recorded in the unique islands of the Seychelles.

Rob Lucking



Handbook of the Birds of the World. Volume 6

Josep del Hoyo, Andrew Elliott and Jordi Sargatal (eds). 2001. Lynx Edicions, Barcelona. 589 pp, 44 colour plates, numerous colour photographs. UK£110.

Handbook of the Birds of the World (*HBW*) is an ambitious project to comprehensively document and illustrate all of the world's birds. Volume 6, covering the families mousebirds to hornbills, will undoubtedly be a favourite among birders with an interest in Africa. As well as covering bee-eaters, kingfishers and rollers, some of the continent's most colourful and charismatic species, the volume also treats four of the Afrotropical region's endemic families: mousebirds, ground-rollers, cuckoo-roller and wood-hoopoes.

A feature of *HBW* is that each volume commences with a foreword on a particular issue of interest in ornithology. This volume starts with a comprehensive and readable 42-page essay in Avian Bioacoustics by Don Kroodsma and the late Luis Baptista.

The bulk of the volume consists of the featured family accounts following a standard format with sections including systematics, habitat, general habits, food and feeding, breeding, relationship with man and status and conservation. These are liberally illustrated with a selection of high-quality photographs. The general family accounts are followed by concise species accounts accompanied by illustrated plates, a distribution map and a bibliography of all literature cited.

The combination of photographs and illustrations works particularly well in this volume given the colourful and photogenic nature of many of the families under review. The collection of photographs accompanying the bee-eaters account is, in my mind, unsurpassed. The colour plates are also of an exceptionally high quality, though this is perhaps unsurprising given the involvement of established artists such as Tim Worfolk, Jan Wilczur and Chris Rose.

At UK£110 this is not a cheap book, but nevertheless it is extremely good value considering that Volume 6 comprehensively describes and illustrates no fewer than 258 species belonging to 12 families. If you buy only one bird book this year, you couldn't pick a better one than this.

Rob Lucking

Threatened Birds of the World

BirdLife International. 2000. 852 pp, numerous colour illustrations. BirdLife International, Cambridge, UK and Lynx Edicions, Barcelona. UK£70.

Almost three years in the making and weighing in at a hefty 4 kg, this landmark publication from BirdLife International and Lynx Edicions sets the context for global bird conservation for the foreseeable future. It is also the result of a genuine partnership with many conservation organisations and private individuals freely giving information, expertise and financial support.

Effective conservation action is dependent upon accurate and up-to-date knowledge, and BirdLife International has a long history of identifying global bird conservation priorities. In 1980 BirdLife's predecessor organisation, the International Council for Bird Preservation (ICBP) published the first bird Red Data Book. This was followed eight years later by *Birds to Watch*, the first global checklist of threatened birds. *Birds to Watch 2*, published in 1994, updated this list using more objective criteria to assess extinction risk. *Threatened Birds of the World* goes a step further and not only documents all 1,186 bird species (12% of bird species worldwide) that are considered at threat from extinction in the wild within the next 100 years but maps their distributions, and for the first time illustrates every one.

Introductory chapters cover extinction risks, biodiversity hotspots, habitats under threat and possible solutions to the threats facing the world's birds. Each chapter is separated by a fine full-page painting from the BirdLife Rare Bird Club collection.

The bulk of the book, however, is given to the individual species accounts. This section is preceded by a useful summary of how the different threat criteria are reached using a global standard established by the International Union for the Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources (IUCN).

Each species account follows a standard format with a small illustration and identification information, and a brief summary of the species' conservation status. A map depicts the species' current known and, if appropriate, projected range. For species with a tiny known range an inset map has also been incorporated to permit the reader to set this within a clearer geographical context.

Sub-headings describe in more detail the species' range and population, its ecology, threats and current conservation action. A unique feature of the publication is the series of targets set for each species. These have been derived from published literature and through consultation with those with a particular knowledge of the species.

The Afro-Malagasy region contains just fewer than 200 globally threatened species and reading briefly through a number of the species accounts, it is noticeable that even basic knowledge such as range is lacking for many of these. For example, almost 40% of data deficient species are found within the area covered by the African Bird Club. Though political instability in some regions may be responsible for several of these gaps, there is a clear role for intrepid birders to make an important contribution.

Threatened Birds of the World is clearly of great interest to both professional conservationists and keen birders alike. My only minor concern is one of cost. At UK£70 (US$110) this is not a cheap book by any means and is likely to be unaffordable to many conservation practioners working within Africa. However, hopefully the planned World Bird Database will make this information freely available on the World Wide Web in due course. This minor grumble aside, *TBW* (as it appears set to become known) is a magnificent publication and will prove to be the single most important source for setting bird conservation priorities in years to come.

Rob Lucking

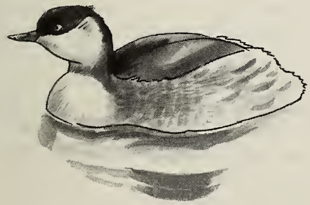
Recent Reports

These are largely unconfirmed records published for interest only; **records are mostly from the second half of 2000 and early 2001, with a few from earlier dates.** We thank all birders who have sent in their records and urge them to submit full details to the relevant national or regional organisations. It is suggested that observations of each species be compared with relevant literature to set new data in context and that observers who are unfamiliar with the status of birds in a particular country refer to R.J. Dowsett's (1993) Afrotropical avifaunas: annotated country checklists (in: R.J. Dowsett and F. Dowsett-Lemaire. *A Contribution to the Distribution and Taxonomy of Afrotropical and Malagasy Birds.* Tauraco Research Report 5. Liège: Tauraco Press) or more recent or appropriate sources before submitting records.

Azores

Records in late August 2000–April 2001 include the following.

A **Great Northern Diver** *Gavia immer* was in Porto Pim harbour, Faial, on 16 February. A **Pied-billed Grebe** *Podilymbus podiceps* was seen at Lagoa Funes, São Miguel, on 19 February, and a **Black-necked Grebe** *Podiceps nigricollis* at Horta harbour, Faial, on 8–9 December. Up to five first-winter **Double-crested Cormorant** *Phalacrocorax auritus* were recorded on four islands, in October–November and in February, including two that apparently wintered at Santa Cruz das Flores, Flores. An immature **Green-backed Heron** *Butorides striatus* was at Santa Cruz, Flores, on 21 October and a **Snowy Egret** *Egretta thula* at Mosteiro on 11 November.



Black-necked Grebe *Podiceps nigricollis* by Mark Andrews

The first **Fulvous Whistling Duck** *Dendrocygna bicolor* for the Azores was seen at Ponta Delgada harbour, São Miguel, on 29 August. A female **Wood Duck** *Aix sponsa* was at Lajes das Flores, Flores, on 11 February. Also on Flores, on 10–11 February, were a pair of **Eurasian Wigeon** *Anas penelope* (another pair was on Pico) and four **American Wigeon** *A. americana.* The first record of a pure pair of **American Black Duck** *A. rubripes* breeding in the Western Palearctic was obtained on 27–28 August, when a male, two females and two not yet fully grown juveniles were sighted on Lagoa Branca, Flores. In September up to c17 American Black Duck were recorded on the same island (including at least four Mallard hybrids). Two **Ring-necked Duck** *Aythya collaris* were present on 4–12 November at Lagoa Azul, São Miguel. Also there were two **Lesser Scaup** *A. affinis* on 2–4 November, with another at Lagoa das Furnas, São Miguel, on 3 November. A first-year **King Eider** *Somateria spectabilis* was photographed on São Miguel on 3 November. The second **Bufflehead** *Bucephala albeola* for the islands, a female, stayed at Santa Cruz, Graciosa, from 16 December to at least 9 March. A **Red-breasted Merganser** *Mergus serrator* was at Porto Pim harbour, Faial, on 1–16 February, and a female **Hooded Merganser** *M. cucullatus* at Caldeira Branca, Flores, on 10–11 February.

From late August to early November 2000 a selection of principally North American vagrants was recorded, including an **American Golden Plover** *Pluvialis* (*dominica*) *dominica*, up to five **Semipalmated Sandpipers** *Calidris pusilla*, two **Least Sandpipers** *C. minutilla* (with one also on 18 February 2001), up to 35 **White-rumped Sandpipers** *C. fuscicollis*, a **Baird's Sandpiper** *C. bairdii*, two **Pectoral Sandpipers** *C. melanotos*, a **Sharp-tailed Sandpiper** *C. acuminata* (at Cabo da Praia, Terceira, on 23 August; apparently the first for the Azores), a **Short-billed Dowitcher** *Limnodromus griseus*, a **Hudsonian Whimbrel** *Numenius phaeopus hudsonicus*, an **Upland Sandpiper** *Bartramia longicauda*, a **Greater Yellowlegs** *Tringa melanoleuca*, four **Lesser Yellowlegs** *T. flavipes*, approximately five **Spotted Sandpipers** *Actitis macularia* (with one also on 8 April 2001) and a **Wilson's Phalarope** *Phalaropus tricolor.*

Spotted Sandpiper *Actitis macularia* by Mark Andrews

Up to four **Ring-billed Gulls** *Larus delawarensis* were seen in November–April, with usually up to four reported and a single flock of 56 on 18 February. A second-winter **Glaucous Gull** *Larus hyperboreus* was in Madelena harbour, Pico, on at least 17 February (per *Birding World* 13: 362, 407, 443–446, 480 and 14: 56, 99 and 150; per *Dutch Birding* 22: 295 and 23: 42, 99–103).

Botswana

A **Sanderling** *Calidris alba* was seen at the Chobe River, near Kasane, on 17 October 2000. Other October records include a female **Brown-necked (Cape) Parrot** *Poicephalus robustus* 8 km north of Maun along the Thamalakane River on 18th, a **Half-collared Kingfisher** *Alcedo semitorquata* along the Chobe River on 19th, and a pair of **White-breasted Cuckoo-shrikes** *Coracina pectoralis* 10 km south of Pandamatenga on 17th (*ID*).

Burkina Faso

During field training in bird identification, organised by the BirdLife Partner

White-backed Night Heron *Gorsachius leuconotus* by Craig Robson

NATURAMA, in October–November 2000, two species were identified that appear not to have been documented for the country: **Short-winged Cisticola** *Cisticola brachypterus* and **Yellow-bellied Hyliota** *Hyliota flavigaster*. Both were found at Nazinga Game Ranch, south of Po National Park. The cisticola, a widespread and generally common species in West Africa, was also recorded recently at other localities in the country by other observers (*RD*). **White-backed Night Heron** *Gorsachius leuconotus*, another addition to the Burkina list, was also recently discovered at Nazinga (*BP*).

Cameroon

The following records were made October 2000–March 2001.

A **Eurasian Bittern** *Botaurus stellaris* was found at Ngaoundaba on 12 March (*NB*). Lake Ossa, near Edea, proved to be an important locality for **Hartlaub's Duck** *Pteronetta hartlaubii*, a visit in February producing several pairs in each creek, with a total population probably well over 1,000 individuals (*RJD & FDL*). A flock of c80 **African Swallow-tailed Kite** *Chelictinia riocourii* passed over Waza National Park on 7 March (*NB*). Two **Terek Sandpiper** *Xenus cinereus* were discovered at Dizangue, Edea, on 29 March; this apparently constitutes the third record from Cameroon (*ML*). A **Buff-spotted Flufftail** *Sarothrura elegans* mist-netted at Mann's Spring, Mt Cameroon, on 9 March, was, at 2,300 m, a new altitudinal record for western Africa. Also there, **African Grass Owl** *Tyto capensis* was heard twice on forest edge; this is only the second locality for Cameroon (the other being Manenguba Crater) and the westernmost limit of its range. **Sandy Scops Owl** *Otus icterorhynchus*, singing at Mann's Spring, was also an altitudinal record (*RJD & FDL*). The species was recently also added to the list of Campo Ma'an NP. **Vermiculated Fishing Owl** *Scotopelia bouvieri* was recorded on four occasions in January–February: close to Dimako in the east, at Ebogo in the centre, at Takamanda in Southwest Province and in Campo Ma'an NP (*ML*). **Scarce Swift** *Schoutedenapus myoptilus* was common over the southern slopes of Mt Cameroon (900–2,500 m), on 4–12 March; they were especially active and noisy in early morning and late afternoon. **Yellow-casqued Wattled Hornbill** *Ceratogymna elata* was found in several new forest localities in Mungo and Nkam departments, east to the Makombe River (*RJD & FDL*). Two **Willcocks's Honeyguide** *Indicator willcocksi* were recorded at Ngaoundaba in March. A male **Little Grey Woodpecker** *Dendropicos elachus* was seen just south of Waza on 9 March; though suspected to occur south to Garoua, there appears to be only one other confirmed sighting, in Waza, of this Sahel specialist (*NB*). A **Common Redstart** *Phoenicurus phoenicurus* at Nkondjock (04°51'N 10°14'E) on 21–23 February represents the southernmost record in western Africa (*RJD & FDL*). In December, **Black-faced Rufous Warbler** *Bathmocercus rufus* constituted another addition to the Campo Ma'an NP list; the species was previously not known from the south-west (*ML*). A **Common Chiffchaff** *Phylloscopus collybita* was singing at Mann's Spring, Mt Cameroon, on 5–11 March, confirming an earlier sight record from the mountain; this is the southernmost locality in this part of Africa (*RJD & FDL*). In March, a pair of **Cricket Warbler** *Spiloptila clamans* was found at the same site, near Mora, where first recorded in the country in 1995 (*NB*). A **Green-backed Eremomela** *Eremomela canescens* was observed north of Batouri, near the border with the Central African Republic; the record is interesting in that the individual was a typical *canescens* and that those from the area are considered intermediates between *canescens* and *pusilla* by Louette (1981. *The Birds of Cameroon*) (*ML*). A male **Blackcap** *Sylvia atricapilla* was at Lake Awing on 5 March; this species is apparently uncommon in Cameroon (*NB*). Two surveys undertaken in Takamanda Reserve, on the border with Nigeria, in January and March, produced an impressive list of 292 species, including several Afromontane taxa, such as **White-tailed Warbler** *Poliolais lopesi*, **Grey-chested Illadopsis** *Kakamega poliothorax* and **White-throated Mountain Babbler** *Kupeornis gilberti*. An **Ussher's Flycatcher** *Muscicapa ussheri* was also claimed there on 27 January; good light conditions permitted plumage details to be compared with those of a nearby Sooty Flycatcher *M. infuscata* (uniform as opposed to streaked/mottled, clearly greyer and slightly larger than *M. infuscata*). The species is here at the extreme eastern edge of its range (*ML*). **Grey-necked Picathartes** *Picathartes oreas* appeared widespread in Mungo and Nkam departments, with one colony containing c30 nests (*RJD & FDL*). A **Spotted Thrush Babbler** *Ptyrticus turdinus* at Nguelemendouka, in the centre, on 12 February, constitutes the southernmost record for Cameroon (*ML*).

Vermiculated Fishing Owl *Scotopelia bouvieri* by Nik Borrow

Cameroon Sunbird *Cyanomitra oritis* was found on some of the highest hills, above 1,000 m, in Ndokbou and Ebo Forests, Nkam region, alongside other montane species such as **Grey-chested Illadopsis** *Kakamega poliothorax* and **Pink-footed Puffback** *Dryoscopus angolensis*; all represent range extensions (*RJD & FDL*). In the Meiganga area, in the north-east, several **Palestine Sunbirds** *Cinnyris osea* were found on 24 October and 1 November. There was only one previous record, of a mist-netted individual, in the same area (Louette 1981); the species is rather similar to Orange-tufted Sunbird *C. bouvieri* and may have been previously misidentified or overlooked. Two new localities were found for **Black Bishop** *Euplectes gierowii* on the Adamawa Plateau, between Meiganga and Ngaoundal, on 1 November, and west of Bertoua, on 19 December; the species may be more widespread than previously thought. **Wattled Starling** *Creatophora cinerea* was encountered south of Maroua on 13 November (*ML*).

Canary Islands

Records from September 2000 to April 2001 include the following.
A **Double-crested Cormorant** *Phalacrocorax auritus* was reported from Tenerife on 17 November (per *Birding World* 13: 480). The first **Yellow-billed Stork** *Mycteria ibis* for the Canary Islands was initially reported from Fuerteventura on 19 September and remained until at least April (*TC*). Up to four **Ruddy Shelduck** *Tadorna ferruginea* and up to five **Marbled Duck** *Marmaronetta angustirostris* were present at Embalse de Los Molinos, Fuerteventura, from May 2000 to at least February (*TC*), and four Ruddy Shelduck were also seen at a pool north of Triquivijate, on the same island, on 17–18 April (*JW & SW*). A presumed vagrant female **Wood Duck** *Aix sponsa* was at Laguna de Barlovento, La Palma, on 18 November (per *Birding World* 13: 480). Two **Lesser Scaup** *Aythya affinis* remained through December at Roquito del Fraile, Tenerife (*TC*). An immature pale morph **Booted Eagle** *Hieraaetus pennatus* was at Morro Jable, Fuerteventura, on 6 November (per *Birding World* 13: 445–446). A **Marsh Sandpiper** *Tringa stagnatilis* was at a pool north of Triquivijate, Fuerteventura, on 18 April (*JW & SW*). An adult **Spotted Sandpiper** *Actitis macularia* was discovered on Costa Teguisa, Lanzarote, on 10 January (per *Dutch Birding* 23: 103). A first-winter **Bonaparte's Gull** *Larus philadelphia* was seen at Playa de las Americas, Tenerife, on 27 November (per *Birding World* 13: 480). A first-winter **Glaucous Gull** *Larus hyperboreus* was at Santa Cruz, La Palma, on 25 October, and a second-winter at Tazacorte, La Palma, on 20 November (per *Dutch Birding* 23: 47 and *Birding World* 13: 480). Approximately 20 **Black Tern** *Chlidonias niger* were in a mixed flock of terns and Cory's Shearwaters *Calonectris diomedea* c2 km offshore between Caleta de Fustes and Puerto Negro, Fuerteventura, in mid-April (*JW & SW*). A **Chimney Swift** *Chaetura pelagica* was reported from Matagorda, Lanzarote, on 2 January (per *Birding World* 14: 11).

If accepted, a **Citrine Wagtail** *Motacilla citreola* claimed from Roquito del Fraile, Tenerife, on 11 October, would be the first for the Canary Islands (per *Dutch Birding* 22: 299). A **Richard's Pipit** *Anthus novaeseelandiae* was at Morro Jable, Fuerteventura on 15–16 November and a female **Ring Ouzel** *Turdus torquatus* also there on 13 November (per *Birding World* 13: 445–446). A **Great Reed Warbler** *Acrocephalus arundinaceus* was singing in dense reeds near Triquivijate, Fuerteventura, on 18 April (*JW & SW*). On the same island, the second **Desert Warbler** *Sylvia nana* for the archipelago was discovered at Caleta de Fustes, on 16 February (per *Birding World* 14: 99) and two **Corn Bunting** *Miliaria calandra*, rare on Fuerteventura, were singing near Triquivijate, on 18 April (*JW & SW*).

Cape Verde Islands

Records from April 2001 included the following. On 16th, 185 **Fea's Petrel** *Pterodroma (mollis) feae* were counted off Ponto do Sol, Santo Antão. A **Sooty Shearwater** *Puffinus griseus* was between Raso and São Nicolau on 12th. At least ten pairs of **Red-billed Tropicbird** *Phaethon aethereus*, found breeding at Tarafal, Santo Antão, on 17th, apparently represent a new colony. A dark morph **Western Reef Egret** *Egretta gularis* and two **Intermediate Egret** *E. intermedia* were at Rabil Lagoon, Boavista, on 22nd. A drake **Garganey** *Anas querquedula* at Mindelo sewage ponds, São Vicente, on 14–18th, constitutes the first record for the archipelago. Also there was an **American Golden Plover** *Pluvialis (dominica) dominica* on 18th. A **Spur-winged Lapwing** *Vanellus spinosus* observed at Tarrafal, São Nicolau, on 11th, was another addition to the Cape Verde list. A **Caspian Tern** *Sterna caspia* and three **Royal Terns** *S. maxima* were at Rabil Lagoon, Boavista, on 22nd. Two more (possible) firsts were a **Desert Lark** *Ammomanes deserti* seen at Espargos, Sal, on 19th, and a **Greater Short-toed Lark** *Calandrella brachydactyla* at Barril, São Nicolau, on 11–13th. Two **Red-rumped Swallows** *Hirundo daurica* were on Branco, on 11th. A **Red-throated Pipit** *Anthus cervinus* was recorded at Barril, São Nicolau, on 13th. Eight **Cape Verde Warbler** *Acrocephalus brevipennis* were found singing at Ribeira da Prata, São Nicolau, on 13th (*JPS* per *Birding World* 14: 150).

Spur-winged Lapwing *Vanellus spinosus* by Mark Andrews

Congo-Brazzaville

An **Ayres's Hawk Eagle** *Hieraaetus ayresii*, seen at Mbeli Bai on 28 December 2000, apparently constitutes only the second record for the country (*FM*).

Côte d'Ivoire

Records in December 2000–May 2001 include the following.
The most remarkable and unexpected record is undoubtedly that of an **Eleonora's Falcon** *Falco eleonorae*, video-taped in Mt Peko National Park in March; in West Africa, this species had previously only certainly been recorded in northern Mauritania (per *GR*). A **Lappet-faced Vulture** *Aegypius tracheliotos* was seen with a huge flock of other vultures at a dead hippopotamus at Gué Auto in Comoé National Park, on 27 December; this is a rare species in Côte d'Ivoire. A **Eurasian Hobby** *Falco subbuteo* flew past Sikolo, in the north, on 29 December; this is an uncommon migrant. Two male **Yellow-throated Cuckoo** *Chrysococcyx flavigularis* were seen displaying at Guiroutou, near Taï NP, on 1 February; they lowered their bodies onto a branch and stretched the head and neck vertically up, thus exposing the yellow throat, while calling vigorously. This behaviour was seen at the same locality and on almost the same date in 2000. The rarely seen **Maned Owl** *Jubula lettii* was observed and videoed on 28 January at Tauraco Camp, Taï

Eleonora's Falcon *Falco eleonorae* by Craig Robson

NP. Single **Rufous Fishing Owls** *Scotopelia ussheri* were seen near Mt Niénokoué Camp in Taï NP on 5 January and along the Hana River on 1 February (cf. *Bull. ABC* 7: 147). Also near Mt Niénokoué Camp was a pair of **Brown Nightjar** *Caprimulgus binotatus* on 5 January, with a single at Tauraco Camp on 29 February; the species appears to favour riverine habitat with *Raphia* palm inside forest. In Marahoué NP, a **Yellow-footed Honeyguide** *Melignomon eisentrauti*, seen and tape-recorded on 21 December, constitutes the first confirmed record for the country; it was also the first time the previously undescribed song had been recorded. Single **Willcocks's Honeyguide** *Indicator willcocksi*, a scarce species in the country, were recorded at Dabou on 21 December and in Yapo Forest on 23rd.

A group of six **Purple Glossy Starlings** *Lamprotornis purpureus*, a northern savanna species, was a surprise find at the coastal town of Grand-Bassam, on 3 February. Both **Maxwell's Black Weaver** *Ploceus albinucha* and **Preuss's Golden-backed Weaver** *P. preussi* were seen in the Guiroutou area of Taï NP in February. A male **Brown-rumped Bunting** *Emberiza affinis* was singing in the north of Comoé NP on 27 December; this species is considered rare in the country (all *NB*).

The first ornithological survey of Mt Sangbé NP, undertaken in March–May, recorded c300 species, including the third **Arabian Bustard** *Ardeotis arabs* for Côte d'Ivoire. **Golden-tailed Woodpecker** *Campethera abingoni*, previously only known from Comoé NP (cf. Falk & Salewski 1999, *Bull ABC* 6: 101–102) was encountered several times. Ten pairs of the enigmatic **Baumann's Greenbul** *Phyllastrephus baumanni* were found at different sites throughout the park; this species was previously only known from two other localities in the country. Several male **Emin's Shrike** *Lanius gubernator* were found and the song was tape-recorded for the first time. **Emerald Starling** *Lamprotornis iris* was locally common at the western limit, with flocks of up to 100, including juveniles. **Dybowski's Twinspot** *Euschistospiza dybowski* was also locally not uncommon (*RD, GM & HR*).

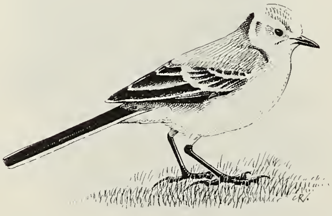
Djibouti

On 2–16 February 2001, the first systematic count of waterbirds on the mudflats around Djibouti city was undertaken. Over 10,000 waterbirds of 66 species were counted. The more interesting records include the following.

A **Masked Booby** *Sula dactylatra*, flying north on 10 February, constitutes the second record for Djibouti. **Black Heron** *Egretta ardesiaca* was regularly recorded at low tide, with a maximum of eight on 5 February; the species was first recorded in Djibouti in autumn 1998. A total of 352 **Crab Plovers** *Dromas ardeola* was recorded, with a roost maximum of 174 along the Loyada section of coast on 8 February; as the 1% threshold for the estimated population is 300, Djibouti supports internationally important numbers of this species. **Lesser Sand Plover** *Charadrius mongolus* was the most numerous waterbird, with a total of 1,368 and a roost maximum of 641 along the Loyada section of coast on 8 February; the 1% threshold being 250, these are internationally important numbers. A non-breeding adult **Great Knot** *Calidris tenuirostris* was found roosting just to the west of the city on 9 February; this is the first record for Djibouti and apparently only the fourth of this Asiatic species for Africa. Previous records were from Morocco (one) and the Seychelles (two). Up to two **Spotted Redshank** *Tringa erythropus* were present on the freshwater pools in Oued Ambouli throughout; the third record for Djibouti. A total of 861 **Terek Sandpipers** *Xenus cinereus* was recorded, with a roost maximum of 425 along the Loyada section of coast on 8 February; these are important numbers, as the 1% threshold is 100.

A first-winter **Great Black-headed Gull** *Larus ichthyaetus* was seen on 8 February, the second record for Djibouti; this species is a vagrant to Ethiopia and Somalia and a scarce winter visitor in Yemen. **Black-headed Gull** *Larus ridibundus* was much scarcer than on previous winter visits and only regular around the waste-water discharge pools to the west of the city, with a maximum of five on 9 February. **Slender-billed Gull** *Larus genei*, formerly considered a vagrant with only two records, both from the north-east coast, was found to be relatively common with at least 20 present along the entire coast. This species is a vagrant to Ethiopia and a regular winter visitor and passage migrant in Yemen. A total of 208 **Little/Saunders's Terns** *Sterna albifrons/saundersi* was recorded, with a roost maximum of 96 on 10 February. Though it proved difficult to separate these two species during the survey, Saunders's Tern is considered to have been the more numerous. The 1% threshold being 200, Djibouti probably supports internationally important numbers of this species. Three **Whiskered Tern** *Chlidonias hybridus* were present west of the city from 9 February; the second record for Djibouti, the first being two individuals in the same area in April 1984. The species is a rare winter visitor to southern Somalia and a scarce migrant in Yemen.

A female **Citrine Wagtail** *Motacilla citreola* was present around the waste-water discharge pools just west of the city from 7 February; the second record for Djibouti. A **Fan-tailed Raven** *Corvus rhipidurus* flew east c12 km west of the city on 11 February; the first record from this part of the country (all *HW & GW*).



Citrine Wagtail *Motacilla citreola* by Craig Robson

Egypt

Two alleged **Western Sandpiper** *Calidris mauri* reportedly trapped on 30–31 January 2000 at Zaranik, north

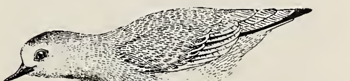
Sinai, and which would have been the country's first record (*Bull. ABC* 7: 146) have now been rejected (*Dutch Birding* 23: 47)

Two interesting records from March 2000 are an immature **Common Myna** *Acridotheres tristis* at Sharm el Sheikh sewage farm, south Sinai, on 28th (the second record for Egypt) and two pairs of **Desert Finch** *Rhodopechys obsoleta* observed at El Salhaya Reclamation in the Nile Delta on 31st (the first record on the African continent; there are fewer than ten records for Egypt, all previously from the Sinai peninsula, per *GK*).

The following records are from September 2000 to April 2001. A **Eurasian Bittern** *Botaurus stellaris* was found north of Marsa Alam on 14 April (per *Birding World* 14: 150). Single **Goliath Herons** *Ardea goliath* were at Lake Nasser on 29 January (*MBD & TN*) and near Hamatta on 14 April (per *Birding World* 14: 150). An **Egyptian Goose** *Alopochen aegyptiacus*, found at the Sharm el Sheikh sewage treatment plant on 7 February (*AR*) was still there on 31 March (per *Birding World* 14: 150); the species was first recorded at this site on 8 December 1999. A **Ruddy Shelduck** *Tadorna ferruginea* was found between Qena and Nag Hammadi on 15 January (*MBD & SBD/GBS*). A total of 16 **Lappet-faced Vultures** *Aegypius tracheliotos* was counted at Gebel Elba on 2–6 November (*R&LC, MBD & SBD*) and 17 between Marsa Alam and Shamatel, on 13 April (per *Birding World* 14: 150). Two **Greater Spotted Eagle** *Aquila clanga* were between Aswan and Kom Ombo on 12 January, with two more between Qena and Nag Hammadi on 15 January (*MBD & SBD/GBS*), and one at Philae Temple, Aswan, on 30 January (*MBD & TN*). Also at the latter site was an **Imperial Eagle** *A. heliaca*, on 12 January (*MBD & SBD/GBS*) and still present on 30 January (*MBD & TN*). A **Golden Eagle** *A. chrysaetos* was at Sharm el Sheikh sewage treatment plant on 7 February (*AR*) and a **Verreaux's Eagle** *A. verreauxii* at Gebel Elba on 3 November (*R&LC, MBD & SBD*). Also at Sharm el Sheikh was a **Demoiselle Crane** *Anthropoides virgo*, on 7 February (*AR*).

A male **Greater Painted-snipe** *Rostratula benghalensis* was at Crocodile Island, Luxor, on 17 January (*MBD & SBD/GBS*), and two were there on 24–25 February (*PF*). Two **Black-winged Pratincole** *Glareola nordmanni* were found near Bilbis on 21 September (*DF*). Two **Kittlitz's Plover** *Charadrius pecuarius* were at Lake Nasser on 28–29 January (*MBD & TN*). The third **Three-banded Plover** *C. tricollaris* for Egypt and the Western Palearctic was at Wadi El Natrun on 20 September (the first and second were also in Egypt, on 5–26 March 1993 at Jebel Asfar and on 14 December 1997 at Aswan; *Sandgrouse* 22: 67–68, *Bull. ABC* 5: 143) (*DF*). A maximum of 13 **White-tailed Plover** *Vanellus leucurus* was between Qena and Nag Hammadi on 15 January (*MBD & SBD/GBS*); three were at Crocodile Island, Luxor, on 1 February (*MBD & TN*), with one still there on 22nd (*PF*). One or two **Great Black-headed Gull** *Larus ichthyaetus* were at Lake Qarun, El Faiyum, on 10 January (*MBD & SBD/GBS*), with one still there on 4 February (*MBD & TN*). Two **African Skimmer** *Rynchops flavirostris* were between Edfu and Esna on 24 December (*MBD & SBD/GBS*). Two **Namaqua Dove** *Oena capensis* were seen at Sharm el Sheikh on 24–25 September (*DF*). Six **Egyptian Nightjar** *Caprimulgus aegyptius* were near Abu Simbel on 30 September (*DF*), with at least two there on 28 January (*MBD & TN*) and 7 March (per *Birding World* 14: 99). A **White-breasted Kingfisher** *Halcyon smyrnensis*, seen at Dr. Ragib's Pharaohnic Village on 2 September, constitutes the first record for central Cairo, and one was nearby on the Nile, on 2 October (*MBD & PP*); the first record from the northern Nile Delta was on 4 April 2000, when one was seen near Baltim, Lake Burullus (per *GK*).

An **Olive-backed Pipit** *Anthus hodgsoni* was at Sharm el Sheikh on 15 November. A **Siberian Stonechat** *Saxicola (torquata) maura* was found at Gebel Elba on 5 November. The first **Black Bush Robin** *Cercotrichas podobe* for Egypt was recorded at Wadi Aedib, Gebel Elba, on 3 November (*Sandgrouse* 23: 62–64). A **Yellow-browed Warbler** *Phylloscopus inornatus* was 40 km south of Ras Sudr, west Sinai, on 18 October (*R&LC, MBD & SBD*). The third or fourth **Hume's Yellow-browed Warbler** *Phylloscopus humei* for Egypt was at Ain Sukhna on 18 November. Two **Desert Warbler** *Sylvia nana* were by the Safaga–Qena road on 16 January (*MBD & SBD/GBS*). A **Red-breasted Flycatcher** *Ficedula parva* was 40 km south of Ras Sudr, west Sinai, on 18–21 October. An **Isabelline Shrike** *Lanius isabellinus* was at Gebel Elba on 6 November (*R&LC, MBD & SBD*). A juvenile **Rose-coloured Starling** *Sturnus roseus*, a rare autumn migrant to Egypt, was at Sharm el Sheikh on 24 September (*DF*). Small flocks of **Red Avadavat** *Amandava amandava* were seen between Kom Ombo and Nag Hammadi on 12–20 January (*MBD & SBD/GBS*). Two **Indian Silverbill** *Euodice malabarica*, the first record for Egypt, were seen at Sharm el Sheikh on 3 December (*TP & MBD*; *Sandgrouse* 23: 67–68).



White-tailed Plover *Vanellus leucurus* by Colin Towe

Ethiopia

The following records were made in October–December 2000. At least 90 **Ruddy Shelduck** *Tadorna ferruginea* were seen on the Sanetti Plateau in October; a high count for this species at the southernmost tip of its range (*NB*). A **Banded Snake Eagle** *Circaetus cinerascens* was seen by Lake Awasa on 1 December and at least six **Golden Eagle** *Aquila chrysaetos* on the Sanetti Plateau on 30 November (*RH*). A juvenile **Sooty Falcon** *Falco concolor* was in the Jemma Valley on 9 October (*NB*). Two **Wahlberg's Honeybird** *Prodotiscus regulus* were seen in Awash National Park on 5 December (*RH*). A pair of **Desert Lark** *Ammomanes deserti* was seen between Dulecha and Fantalle on 11 October; this appears to be an extension of its known range. Also there were at least three pairs of **Black-crowned Sparrow Larks** *Eremopterix nigriceps*, apparently outside the range shown in *Birds of Africa*, but within that given by Urban & Brown (1971, *A Checklist of the Birds of Ethiopia*). A pair of **Golden Pipit** *Tmetothylacus tenellus* was seen south of Yabello on 23 October. A female immature **Black Redstart** *Phoenicurus ochruros* in the Jemma Valley was at the southern tip of its wintering range (*NB*). A **White-crowned Black Wheatear** *Oenanthe leucopyga* was seen by the roadside between Addis Ababa and Nazret in December (*RH*). A **Lead-coloured Flycatcher (Grey Tit-Flycatcher)** *Myioparus plumbeus* at Sof Omar was apparently just outside its known range. An **Icterine Warbler** *Hippolais icterina* was in the Jemma Valley on 9 October (*NB*).

Gambia

In the second half of November 2000, a **European Griffon** *Gyps fulvus* was seen at Tanji and Brufut Woods on 19–20th (Fig 1) and two at Basse on 24th, an adult **Ayres's Hawk Eagle** *Hieraaetus ayresii* at Abuko on 18th, and a first-winter **Little Gull** *Larus minutus* at Kotu Stream on 16th and 25th (*THn*; see Fig 2). In December, an **Ovambo Sparrowhawk** *Accipiter ovampensis* was seen at Basse, near the ferry crossing, on 8th, and a **Shining-blue Kingfisher** *Alcedo quadribrachys* at Kiso Bolon, a mangrove creek near Tendaba, on the same day (*PLs*). On 1 March 2001, a **Red-footed Falcon** *Falco vespertinus* flew north-west over Cape Point: this appears to be the first for The Gambia (*A&HM*).

Red-footed Falcon *Falco vespertinus* by Ian Lewington

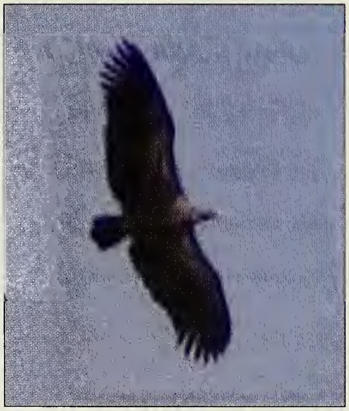


Figure 1. Eurasian Griffon Vulture *Gyps fulvus*, Tanji, The Gambia, November 2000 (Tommy Holmgren)

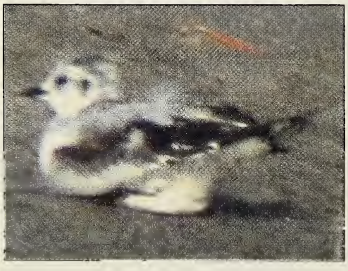


Figure 2. First-winter Little Gull *Larus minutus*, Kotu Stream, The Gambia, November 2000 (Tommy Holmgren)

Madeira

The following records were reported in November 2000–April 2001. Strong southerly winds on 25 March produced large numbers of seabirds off Ponta da Cruz, including c150 **Cape Verde Shearwater** *Calonectris edwardsii*, the first record for the island, and 56 **Little Shearwater** *Puffinus assimilis* (per *Birding World* 14: 150).

A **Cattle Egret** *Bubulcus ibis* was with **Little Egrets** *Egretta garzetta* at Machico on 20 January (per *Birding World* 14: 11). In late January and early February an adult **Peregrine Falcon** *Falco peregrinus* and a **Common Quail** *Coturnix coturnix* were found at Ponta de São Laurenco (per *Birding World* 14: 56). A first-winter **Semipalmated Plover** *Calidris pusilla* was seen on Machio beach on 16 November. Two first-winter **Mediterranean Gull** *Larus melanocephalus* and a first-winter **Audouin's Gull** *L. audouinii* were at Funchal harbour, on 14–19 November (per *Birding World* 13: 445). Also there were six **Ring-billed Gull** *L. delawarensis* in January (per *Birding World* 14: 11) and a female **Ring-necked Parakeet** *Psittacula krameri* (per *Birding World* 14: 56). A **Meadow Pipit** *Anthus pratensis* was seen at Porto Santo on 13–14 January (per *Birding World* 14: 11).

Malawi

Interesting records in October–December 2000 include the following.
An adult female **Eurasian Marsh Harrier** *Circus aeruginosus*, a rarely observed species in Malawi, was on the Nyika Plateau on 1 November (*HB & MVB*). An occupied nesting colony of **Cattle Egret** *Bubulcus ibis*, found between Ulongwe and Liwonde on 2 December, apparently constitutes the first firm evidence of breeding in the country. A **Baillon's Crake** *Porzana pusilla* on the northern edge of Lake Chilwa on 16 November is the first record since the 1950s (*FDL & RJD*). A **Sanderling** *Calidris alba* was along the Shire River in Liwonde NP on 25 October; a rare species this far inland. A **Terek Sandpiper** *Xenus cinereus* was observed along the Shire River in Liwonde National Park on 25 October (*HB & MVB*). At least two **Gull-billed Tern** *Gelochelidon nilotica* were at Lake Chilwa on 4 December; this species is rarely reported this far south. A **Barred Long-tailed Cuckoo** *Cercococcyx montanus* singing at Mwabvi on 22 November is the first record of one in song in the Shire Valley for 40 years. Several pairs of **Scarce Swift** *Schoutedenapus myoptilus* were regular over the south-east slopes of Mt. Zomba in November–early December; the species probably breeds there. An **African Pitta** *Pitta angolensis*, displaying at Lengwe on 20 November, constitutes the first record suggestive of breeding from the Shire Valley. Two **Boulder Chats** *Pinarornis plumosus* were seen on Mt. Kanjoli, near Chongoni, on 6 November; a new locality for this scarce species. A **River Warbler** *Locustella fluviatilis*, observed at Mwabvi on 23 November, may constitute the first sight record of this rarely reported species. A **Basra Reed Warbler** *Acrocephalus griseldis* was seen on the northern edge of Lake Chilwa on 15 November; the few previous Malawi records are of mist-netted individuals. A **White-winged Apalis** *Apalis chariessa* was nest-building at Zomba on 13–14 November; this is only the third known nest. Several **Grey Sunbird** *Cyanomita veroxii* were in Mwabvi, on 22–23 November, as well as in Lengwe, the only previously known locality. At least four **Olive-headed Weaver** *Ploceus olivaceiceps* were singing in territorial dispute at Namizimu, on the Mozambique border, on 1 December; Malawi is the stronghold of this endangered species (*FDL & RJD*).

Mauritania

Records from the Iwik area, Banc d'Arguin National Park, on 4–6 April 2001, included a **Mediterranean Gull** *Larus melanocephalus*, 15 **Grey-headed Gull** *L. cirrocephalus*, six **Lesser Crested Tern** *Sterna bengalensis*, a **Short-eared Owl** *Asio flammeus*, four **Temminck's Horned Lark** *Eremophila bilopha*, two **Red-throated Pipit** *Anthus cervinus* and 12 **Desert Sparrow** *Passer simplex*. At Cap Timirist, in the same park, species seen on 8–9 April included a **Great Egret** *Egretta alba*, a **Hooded Vulture** *Necrosyrtes monachus*, a **Tawny Eagle** *Aquila rapax*, a **Temminck's Stint** *Calidris temminckii*, a **Common Gull** *Larus canus*, two **Lesser Crested Tern**, a **Roseate Tern** *Sterna dougallii*, a **Short-eared Owl**, a **Temminck's Horned Lark** and an adult male **Isabelline Shrike** *L. i. isabellinus*. Estimates for other species were: c500 **Long-tailed Cormorant** *Phalacrocorax africanus*, c5,000 **Eurasian Spoonbill** *Platalea leucorodia*, c50,000 **Grey Plover** *Pluvialis squatarola*, c50,000 **Red Knot** *Calidris canutus*, c5,000 **Curlew Sandpiper** *C. ferruginea*, c50,000 **Dunlin** *C. alpina*, c1,000 **Royal Tern** *Sterna maxima*, c100,000 **Bar-tailed Godwit** *Limosa lapponica* and c100,000 **Whimbrel** *Numenius phaeopus*. A **Little Gull** *Larus minutus* was at Nouakchott on 1 April 2001 (all *KDR*).

Morocco

The following records were made in October 2000–April 2001.

A **Great Northern Diver** *Gavia immer* was claimed from Ouarzazate on 18 March (per *Birding World* 14: 99). A two-hour seawatch off Tarfaya, in the south of the country, on 24 November, after two days of north-west gales, produced 2,000 **Great Shearwater** *Puffinus gravis*, 5,000 **Cory's Shearwater** *Calonectris diomedea* and 30 **Bulwer's Petrel** *Bulweria bulwerii* (per *Birding World* 13: 480). Larache marshes held 50–89 **Glossy Ibis** *Plegadis falcinellus* in October–December (per *Birding World* 13: 407, 480 and 14: 11). A total of 105 **Northern Bald Ibis** *Geronticus eremita* was roosting at Douara, near Oued Massa on 1 January; the local population is reportedly increasing, with perhaps as many as 500 at two roosts in the Massa area alone (per *Birding World* 14: 11). An adult **African Spoonbill** *Platalea alba* was photographed at Dakhla on 26 November (per *Birding World* 13: 480).

An **American Wigeon** *Anas americana* was at Barga on 26 November (per *Birding World* 13: 480 and *Dutch Birding* 23: 43). At least 410 **Red-crested Pochard** *Netta rufina* were counted at Larache Marshes on 29 December (per *Birding World* 14: 11). A **Ring-necked Duck** *Aythya collaris* was at Oued Massa on 31 March (per *Birding World* 14: 150), a **Ferruginous Duck** *A. nyroca* was also there on 14 November (per *Birding World* 13: 445) and a female **Ruddy Duck** *Oxyura jamaicensis* at Barga on 12 November (per *Birding World* 13: 480). A **Lesser Yellowlegs** *Tringa flavipes* was claimed from Oualidia on 12 April (per *Birding* World 14: 150). A **Grey Phalarope** *Phalaropus fulicaria* was at Oued Massa on 18 November (per *Birding World* 13: 480) and up to 20 were near Larache on 29–30 December (per *Dutch Birding* 23: 103). Four **Ring-billed Gull** *Larus delawarensis* were at Tahadart Estuary on 18 October (per *Birding World* 13: 407) and 530 **Audouin's Gull** *L. audouinii* at Sidi Moussa on 27 November (per *Birding World* 13: 480). At Moulay Bousselham camp site, 29 **Marsh Owl** *Asio capensis* were seen on 25 November (per *Birding World* 13: 480). Four **Egyptian Nightjar** *Caprimulgus aegyptius* were observed at Dar Kaoua, south of Erfoud, on 3 April (per *Birding* World 14: 150).

Approximately 1,000 **Lesser Short-toed Larks** *Calandrella rufescens* were counted at Boumalne on 7 November (per *Birding World* 13: 480). **Richard's Pipit** *Anthus novaeseelandiae* was recorded at Merja Zerga on 11 November, at Oued Massa, on 18 November, and two at Massa cultivations on 1 January (per *Birding World* 13: 445, 480; 14: 11). A very high count of 125 **Desert Sparrow** *Passer simplex* was made at the well-known site at Café Yasmina, Merzouga, on 8 November (per *Birding World* 13: 445).

Long-tailed Cormorant *Phalacrocorax africanus* by Mark Andrews

Namibia

A **Red Knot** *Calidris canutus* was seen at Namutoni waterhole, Etosha National Park, on 7 October 2000; this species is rarely recorded inland (*MOS*). An adult **Baird's Sandpiper** *C. bairdii* was photographed at Sossusvlei, on 23 September 2000; this constitutes the third documented record for the Afrotropics, the previous two being from Walvis Bay, Namibia, in October 1863, and the Cape Peninsula, South Africa, in November 1984 (per *Africa—Birds & Birding* 5 (6): 19), although there are also three claims from western Africa.

Niger

Red-headed Lovebird *Agapornis pullaria* was reported along the Niger and Mékrou rivers, at Sounga Dossado 100 km south of Niamey (a pair, September 2000), between Korogoungou and Boumba (a pair, mid-September; one, mid-December), and on the border with Bénin (a pair, 24 January 2001). According to *Birds of Africa* these observations constitute a range extension of several hundred km from the nearest localities in Nigeria. This new species for Niger brings the country list to approximately 526 species (*AV & JB*).

Nigeria

Records from the Jos Plateau, Plateau State, in January–March 2001, include the following.

Five **Tufted Duck** *Aythya fuligula* at Kurra, on 23–24 February, apparently constitute the southernmost record in the country, and a new species to Plateau State; they were with c400 **Northern Pintail** *Anas acuta* and c50 **Garganey** *A. querquedula*, an unusually large flock this far south. A **Rufous Cisticola** *Cisticola rufus* at Amurum (Taboru), on 20 January, was apparently the first record for the Jos Plateau and Plateau State. At Horom, on the plateau's southern edge, **Dybowski's Twinspot** *Euschistospiza dybowskii* was seen on 9–10 March; a south-easterly extension of its known range on the western edge of the plateau, and the first confirmed record in Plateau State (*MH*).

Senegal

The following records were made in October 2000–February 2001.

Two adult **Northern Gannet** *Sula bassana* were seen off Dakar on 27 January; according to Barlow *et al.* (1997, *A Field Guide to the Birds of The Gambia and Senegal*) sightings of full adults are exceptional (*RC & MF*). A new roost of c15,000 **Cattle Egret** *Bubulcus ibis* was found near Guinguinéo in October; roosts in Kaolack probably total approximately twice that number (*BN*). In the Réserve Spéciale de Faune de Ndiaël, four **Black Stork** *Ciconia nigra* were seen on 13 January and 11 **White Stork** *C. ciconia* on 2 December. A **Saddle-billed Stork** *Ephippiorhynchus senegalensis* was in Saloum NP on 9 December. Forty-one **Marabou Stork** *Leptoptilos crumeniferus* circled over Simenti Lodge, Niokolo-Koba NP, on 22 February (*RC & MF*). In December–February, at least 1,000 **African Swallow-tailed Kite** *Chelictinia riocourii* flew daily over Koaloack to their roost. In the morning of 4 February, 11 **Montagu's Harriers** *Circus pygargus*, among which were four melanistic individuals, were seen near Guinguinéo; they probably had roosted together. **Red-necked Falcon** *Falco chicquera* has been the commonest falcon in the Kaolack area since at least the 1970s, and is also present at Guinguinéo, Diourbel and from Thiès to the Gambian border; according to Barlow *et al.* (1997) data from this area are lacking (*BN*). A **Barbary Falcon** *Falco* (*peregrinus*) *pelegrinoides* was seen near Saloum NP on 8 December (*RC & MF*). A **Quail-plover** *Ortyxelos meiffrenii* was observed near Guinguinéo on 4 February. Also there, c100 **Senegal Thick-knee** *Burhinus senegalensis* were on a former millet field, far from water (*BN*). Two **Greater Sand Plover** *Charadrius leschenaultii* were at the Ndiaël reserve on 2 December. An **American Golden Plover** *Pluvialis* (*dominica*) *dominica*, found at Lac Toubap Ndialawe, near N'Dayane, on 17 February, apparently constitutes the second record for Senegal (*RC & MF*). The first **Spotted Sandpiper** *Actitis macularia* for the country was reportedly photographed on Gorée, Dakar, on 20 February (per *Dutch Birding* 23: 103); this would constitute the third record for sub-Saharan Africa, the two previous ones being from Kenya, on 4–5 September 1999, and Cameroon, on 12–22 April 2000 (see *Bull. ABC* 8: 48–50). Eight **Chestnut-bellied Sandgrouse** *Pterocles exustus* were recorded near Guinguinéo on 4 February; this species is common in the north but becomes scarce further south (*BN*). Four **Short-eared Owl** *Asio flammeus* were in Ndiaël reserve on 2 December, with one there on 13 January. A male **Swamp Nightjar** *Caprimulgus natalensis* was claimed from Saloum NP on 9 December. Also there were several **Giant Kingfishers** *Megaceryle maxima* on 19–21 January; though widespread in the country, the species appears not to have been previously reported from this site. A **Greater Honeyguide** *Indicator indicator* was near St Louis on 1 December, and at least two near Bango village, St Louis, on 12 January; there are few records from the north. An immature **Desert Wheatear** *Oenanthe deserti* was observed in Ndiaël reserve on 1 December. Two **Rock Thrush** *Monticola saxatilis* were found at Popenguine on 7 December (*RC & MF*).

Seychelles

The following records were made during the period July 2000 to May 2001 (all per *AS* unless otherwise stated).

Four species not previously recorded from Seychelles have been reported recently, all have yet to be confirmed by Seychelles Bird Records Committee. These were a **Madagascar (Humblot's) Heron** *Ardea humbloti* at the Interisland Quay, Victoria on 5 July, a first-winter **Pied Wheatear** *Oenanthe pleschanka* at Bird Island, on 16–20 November, a **Spotted Redshank** *Tringa erythropus* at Providence, Mahé, on 17 December, and an immature **Saker Falcon** *Falco cherrug* at Aride Island, on 24–25 December. The last report came during a wave of raptor sightings on Aride that also produced an immature **Eastern Red-footed Falcon** *F. amurensis* on 4 December, an immature **Red-footed Falcon** *F. vespertinus* on 12–14 December, an immature **Sooty Falcon** *F. concolor* on 12–15 December, a sub-adult **Hobby** *F. subbuteo* on 14–18 December and an immature **Eleonora's Falcon** *F. eleonorae* on 20–27 December. Raptor sightings also came from Frégate in the same period, with up to four **Eastern Red-footed Falcon** on 12–22 December and a **Hobby** on 6–24 November, with two present on 16 November.

Crab Plover *Dromas ardeola* by Craig Robson

The recent opening of a hotel on Alphonse has provided opportunities for finding vagrants in this group (comprising Alphonse and its near neighbour St Francois Atoll, which are among the most isolated and hitherto least-visited islands of Seychelles). Confirmation of the potential came from a weekend visit that produced a remarkable series of sightings. These were an **Isabelline Wheatear** *Oenanthe isabellina* on 28 January (just one previous accepted record), **Willow Warbler** *Phylloscopus trochilus* on 27 January (three previous records), **Oriental Plover** *Charadrius veredus* on 28 January (three previous records), **Eastern Red-footed Falcon** on 26–28 January (four previous records), **Yellow Wagtail** *Motacilla flava* on 28 January (15 previous records) and **Ruff** *Philomachus pugnax* on 28 January (18 previous records. Also noteworthy was a count of 1,500 **Crab Plover** *Dromas ardeola* on St Francois Atoll on 27 January, declining to 650 by 5 May.

Three **Eurasian Bee-eaters** *Merops apiaster* at Picard, Aldabra on 8 December was the second report of this species for Seychelles. A **Ferruginous Duck** *Aythya nyroca* at Police Bay on 5 April was also a second record in Seychelles. A **Pectoral Sandpiper** *Calidris melanotos* at the Interisland Quay, Victoria, Mahé, on 27 August (*MVB*) was the third report for Seychelles. A **Eurasian Bittern** *Botaurus stellaris* at Mont Fleuri, Mahé on 31 October was also a third report for Seychelles, as was a **White-throated Needletail** *Hirundapus caudacutus* at Mont Signale, Frégate, on 7–8 November.

Socotra

A survey undertaken on 8–29 December 2000 yielded the following interesting records.

Three **Cattle Egret** *Bubulcus ibis* and one **Little Egret** *Egretta garzetta*, both scarce passage migrants, were recorded at Erhina lagoons on 28th. An **Intermediate Egret** *E. intermedia* at Qadub on 24th apparently constitutes the first record for Socotra. A juvenile **Purple Heron** *Ardea purpurea* was at Erhina lagoons on 27th. Also there were two **Garganey** *Anas querquedula* on 9th and three on 27–28th, a **Northern Shoveler** *A. clypeata* on 9th and 28th, a **Common Pochard** *Aythya ferina* on 9th, three **Ferruginous Duck** *A. nyroca* on 9th and 27–28th and a male **Tufted Duck** *A. fuligula* (not previously recorded from Socotra) on 27–28th. **Socotra Buzzard** *Buteo socotrae* was widespread and frequent in the hills and rocky plateaux. Two **Peregrine Falcon** *Falco peregrinus* were near Denegen on 9th, a single at Firiji on 12th and another at Wadi Ayhaft on 12th; they were more like *F. peregrinus* than *F. (p.) pelegrinoides*. A probable **Little Crake** *Porzana parva*, not previously recorded on Socotra, was flushed in a rushy wadi on Dixem plateau, on 27th. Two **Common Moorhen** *Gallinula chloropus*, a vagrant to Socotra, were at Sok lagoons 28th. A total of 17 **Black-winged Stilt** *Himantopus himantopus* was recorded at various localities on the island, throughout the period. Eight **Little Stint** *Calidris minuta* were at Erhina lagoons on 9th and two Diham on 21st. Single **Green Sandpipers** *Tringa ochropus* were at Firiji on 12th, Wadi Ayhaft on 23rd and Erhina lagoons on 27th. Three or four **White-browed Coucal** *Centropus superciliosus* were calling at Firishi on 10–12th and one south of Hadibu on 26th. **Blue-cheeked Bee-eater** *Merops persicus* was recorded at Denegen (one on 10th), Handak (on 15th), Wadi Ayhaft (ten on 23rd) and near Hadibu (one on 26th). A **Hoopoe** *Upupa epops* was at Handak on 15th.

Rock (Pale Crag) Martin *Hirundo fuligula* (*H. obsoleta*) was seen only at two sites, one at 1,000 m near Firishi, on 11th and four at c800 m in Wadi Firiji, on 12th. A **Barn Swallow** *H. rustica* was at Hadibu on 9th. Two unidentified, rather short-billed pipits *Anthus* sp. about the size of Long-billed Pipit *A. similis* were seen at a watering point near Bakairjit on 19th. A **Grey Wagtail** *Motacilla cinerea* was at Wadi Da Asroh on 13th. A **Bluethroat** *Luscinia svecica* was observed in a wadi on the Dixem Plateau, on 27th. A **Black Redstart** *Phoenicurus ochrurus* was at Ras Momi on 25th. Nine to ten **Isabelline Wheatears** *Oenanthe isabellina* were recorded at several localities. Two **Eurasian Starling** *Sturnus vulgaris* were accompanying Socotra Starlings *Onychognathus frater* at Hayf on 14th (all *MJ*).

South Africa

Records in October 2000–February 2001 include the following.
On 27 May, a **Chatham Albatross** *Thalassarche eremita* (=*Diomedea cauta eremita*) was identified on a pelagic trip off the Cape; this constitutes the first record for Africa of this form, which is accorded specific status by *Threatened Birds of the World* (2000) and listed as Critical. On the same trip, and on 12 May, a **Northern Royal Albatross** *Diomedea (epomophora) sanfordi* was also seen. Pelagic trips from the Cape in November yielded up to c12 **Great-winged Petrels** *Pterodroma macroptera* (*TH, VS*) and, on 25th, a **Grey Petrel** *Procellaria cinerea* (*TH*). A **Cory's Shearwater** *Calonectris diomedea* of the race *borealis* was photographed on 12 May; there are four previous specimen records of this race from southern African waters, but no sight records (*JG & TH*). A **Eurasian Bittern** *Botaurus stellaris* was heard booming from reedbeds in Wilderness NP, Western Cape Province, in early November; the species had been declared extinct in the Western Cape, where it used to breed in the 19th century. This appears to be the first record since that of August 1961 at Klawervlei (*CC*).

Rare or vagrant species recorded in January–February included a **Rockhopper Penguin** *Eudyptes chrysocome* at Cape of Good Hope on 17 February, a **Red-billed Tropicbird** *Phaethon aethereus* at sea off Cape Town on 12 January, a **Little Blue Heron** *Egretta caerulea* on Onrus Lagoon, near Velddrif, from 1 February to at least the end of the month, a **Eurasian Oystercatcher** *Haematopus ostralegus* at Tugela River mouth on 12 January, a **Pectoral Sandpiper** *Calidris melanotos* at Babsfontein, near Pretoria, in January, a **Dunlin** *C. alpina* at Geelbek, Langebaan, on 4 February, a **Buff-breasted Sandpiper** *Tryngites subruficollis* at Marievale Bird Sanctuary from 27 January to at least 20 February, a **Broad-billed Sandpiper** *Limicola falcinellus* in Richard's Bay on 18 February, and a **Franklin's Gull** *Larus pipixcan* at Strandfontein sewage works on 15 January (per *ID*). During a few days of strong and persistent south-west winds, a **Sabine's Gull** *Larus sabini* was seen at the mouth of the Umgeni River, Durban, Natal, on 15 October (*SC*); up to 5,000 were foraging c14 km north of Hout Bay on 9 November (*VS*). Single **South Polar Skuas** *Catharacta maccormicki* were off the Cape on 16 April and 12 May (*JG & TH*).

A juvenile **Thick-billed Cuckoo** *Pachycoccyx audeberti* was seen at Hans Merensky Nature Reserve on 24 November (*VS*). A pair of **Blue-throated Sunbird** *Anthreptes reichenowi* was observed at Tembe Elephant Park, northern KwaZulu-Natal, on 5 October; this is well south of the generally quoted southern limit of its range (*SC*).

Tanzania

A **Striped Crake** *Aenigmatolimnas marginalis* reacted to playback of its call at Ruaha NP, on 11 January 2001. **Blue Swallow** *Hirundo atrocaerulea* and **Scarlet-tufted Malachite Sunbird** *Nectarinia johnstoni* were observed at Kifanya, south-east of Njombe, in southern Tanzania, on 8 December 2000; the site is due east of the Livingstone Mts, where the sunbird has previously been recorded. A pair of Blue Swallow was feeding three young in a nest under the eaves of a building at Maganga Farm, Mufindi District, in late December (*EdL*).

Blue Swallow *Hirundo atrocaerulea*
by Mark Andrews

Tunisia

In January 2001, more than 500 **Marbled Duck** *Marmaronetta angustirostris* were counted near Douz on 17th. Near Tozeur, a **Houbara Bustard** *Chlamydotis undulata* was observed on 18th. Thirteen **Thick-billed Larks** *Rhamphocoris clotbey* were at Seldja on 19th; it is an invasion year for this species (*AvdB* per *Birdwatch* 106: 63).

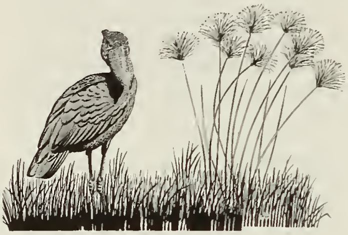
Uganda

Approximately 5,000 **Cattle Egrets** *Bubulcus ibis* were at a single roost at Kabaka's Lake, Kampala, in November–December 2000 (*BB* per *DP*). Up to 20 **Hamerkop** *Scopus umbretta* nests were found together in Queen Elizabeth NP on 21 January 1999 (*MB*) and recently a smaller group near Entebbe (*PK*), each nest apparently being used by more than one pair simultaneously. In Murchison Falls NP, 15–17,000 **Abdim's Storks** *Ciconia abdimii* were filmed at Nyamsika, by the River Nile, by a BBC crew in March 2001. Up to 36 **Grey Crowned Cranes** *Balearica regulorum* roosted on electricity pylons in central Kampala, from March 2000 to at least March 2001 (*JMM & DP*).

Several **Northern White-crowned Shrike** *Eurocephalus rueppelli* were reported from the southern part of the country, in savanna woodland on the road to Kabale, in late 2000 (*GS*); the species was previously known to occur only in the north-east.

Zambia

The most interesting records in July–December 2000 include the following. In July, 330 **Wattled Crane** *Bugeranus carunculatus* and two **Shoebill** *Balaeniceps rex* were counted in the Bangweulu Swamps. At Lochinvar NP three **Slaty Egret** *Egretta vinaceigula*, 780 **White Pelican** *Pelecanus onocrotalus*, 460 **Squacco Heron** *Ardeola ralloides*, 3,510 **Egyptian Goose** *Alopochen aegyptiacus*, 1,300 **Red-knobbed Coot** *Fulica cristata*, 962 **African Jacana** *Actophilornis africanus*, 17,070 **Collared Pratincole** *Glareola pratincola*, 1,112 **Kittlitz's Plover** *Charadrius pecuarius* and 15 **Denham's Bustard** *Neotis denhami* were counted. A **Malagasy Pond Heron** *Ardeola idae* and a late **Striped Crake** *Aenigmatolimnas marginalis* were found in the Luangwa Valley and records of marginal species there included several **Hildebrandt's Francolins** *Francolinus hildebrandti*, some **Pale-billed Hornbills** *Tockus pallidirostris* and a **Black-backed Barbet** *Lybius minor*.



Shoebill *Balaeniceps rex*
by Mike Hodgson
(courtesy of Birdquest)

In August, **Mottled Spinetail** *Telacanthura ussheri* was found nesting in a baobab in the Luangwa Valley, and a **Scaly-throated Honeyguide** *Indicator variegatus* was nearby. Several **White-chinned Prinia** *Schistolais leucopogon* near Chingola were the first for Copperbelt Province. In Choma **European Bee-eater** *Merops apiaster*, **Black Coucal** *Centropus grillii* and **Allen's Gallinule** *Porphyrio alleni* were all unseasonal. In September, several **Red-necked Francolin** *Francolinus afer* were found in Lower Zambezi NP extending their known range. Two adult **Palm-nut Vulture** *Gypohierax angolensis* were in the Luangwa Valley continuing the recent increase in records of this species. Nearby, several **White-winged Starling** *Neocichla gutturalis* and some **Chestnut-mantled Sparrow Weavers** *Plocepasser rufoscapulatus* were in the contact zone between miombo and mopane woodland. A **Taita Falcon** *Falco fasciinucha* in Wonder Gorge was the first Zambian record for several years. Twenty-five species were added to the South Luangwa NP list, on the Muchinga Escarpment, including **Pallid (Eastern Least) Honeyguide** *Indicator meliphilus*, **Bocage's Akalat** *Sheppardia bocagei*, **Evergreen Forest Warbler** *Bradypterus lopezi*, **Laura's Woodland Warbler** *Phylloscopus laurae*, **Sousa's Shrike** *Lanius souzae*, **Bar-winged Weaver** *Ploceus angolensis*, **Black-bellied Seedcracker** *Pyrenestes ostrinus* and **Swee Waxbill** *Estrilda melanotis*. Several **White Stork** *Ciconia ciconia* were near Mazabuka.

In October, a **Terek Sandpiper** *Xenus cinereus* was at Livingstone. In Lochinvar NP were 1,000 **White Pelican** *Pelecanus onocrotalus*, 2,600 **Curlew Sandpiper** *Calidris ferruginea*, 3,000 **Spur-winged Goose** *Plectropterus gambensis*, 4,000 **Red-billed Teal** *Anas erythrorhyncha*, 4,000 **Little Stint** *Calidris minuta*, 4–5,000 **Caspian Plover** *Charadrius asiaticus*, 5–6,000 **Kittlitz's Plover** *C. pecuarius*, four **Pacific Golden Plover** *Pluvialis (dominica) fulva*, five **Grey Plover** *P. squatarola*, one **Sanderling** *Calidris alba*, over 10,000 **Ruff** *Philomachus pugnax*, two **Whimbrel** *Numenius phaeopus*, 20 **Gull-billed Tern** *Gelochelidon nilotica*, 137 **Caspian Tern** *Sterna caspia* and c200 **White-throated Swallow** *Hirundo albigularis*. The dramatic recent increase of **Black-tailed Godwit** *Limosa limosa* occurring in Zambia continued, with 4,300 present. Several **Pallid Harrier** *Circus macrourus* were seen in the Luangwa Valley.

In November, several **Spur-winged Plover** *Vanellus spinosus* were present at Lake Tanganyika. A **European Honey Buzzard** *Pernis apivorus* was seen over Kitwe, **African Hobby** *Falco cuvierii* was also seen there and is possibly breeding near Livingstone, and **Olive-tree Warbler** *Hippolais olivetorum* was seen nearby. A **Baillon's Crake** *Porzana pusilla* was near Choma where a roost of **Parasitic Weaver** *Anomalospiza imberbis* reached several thousand. Six **Slaty Egret** were in Lochinvar NP and **African Pitta** *Pitta angolensis* was

Mottled Spinetail *Telacanthura ussheri*
by Mark Andrews

seen several times in Lower Zambezi and South Luangwa NPs. A **Blackcap** *Sylvia atricapilla* was an interesting find in Mwinilunga. **Northern Wheatear** *Oenanthe oenanthe*, **Montagu's Harrier** *Circus pygargus* and **Olive-tree Warbler** were added to the latter park's list.

In December, a **European Nightjar** *Caprimulgus europaeus* was in Choma. **European Honey Buzzard** and **Eurasian Marsh Harrier** *Circus aeruginosus* were seen in both Serenje and South Luangwa NP, where other raptors of note included **Black Kite** *Milvus migrans* and **Booted Eagle** *Hieraaetus pennatus*. Also in South Luangwa were a **Corn Crake** *Crex crex*, a **Thick-billed Cuckoo** *Pachycoccyx audeberti*, **European Reed Warbler** *Acrocephalus scirpaceus* and another new bird for the valley, **Mottled Swift** *Tachymarptis aequatorialis*. In the lower Luangwa Valley was a **Black-rumped Buttonquail** *Turnix hottentota* and a **Scaly-throated Honeyguide** *Indicator variegatus*, while another **Booted Eagle** was seen in Livingstone (all *PL*).

Records were collated by Ron Demey from contributions supplied by *Hemme Batjes (HB), Mathias Behangana (MB), Arnoud B. van den Berg (AvdB), Nik Borrow/Birdquest (NB), Joost Brouwer (JB), Ben Butele (BB), Stephen Cameron (SC), Roger & Liz Charlwood (R&LC), Tony Clarke (TC), Callan Cohen (CC), Richard Cruse (RC), Ian Davidson (ID), Ron Demey (RD), Kris De Rouck (KDR), Mindy Baha El Din (MBD), Sherif Baha El Din (SBD), Robert J. Dowsett (RJD), Françoise Dowsett-Lemaire (FDL), Dave Farrow/ Birdquest (DF), Mark Finn (MF), Per Forsberg (PF), John Graham (JG), Trevor Hardaker (TH), Roy Hargreaves (RH), Tommy Holmgren (THn), Mark Hopkins (MH), Mike Jennings (MJ), Panta Kasoma (PK), Guy Kirwan (GK), Marc Languy (ML), Peter Leonard (PL), Elisabeth de Leyser (EdL), Peter Los (PLs), Fiona Maisels (FM), Gondo Manh (GM), Anita & Heimo Mikkola (A&HM), Jimmy Muheebwa-Muhoozi (JMM), Traveling Naturalist (TN), Babacar Ndao (BN), Mike O'Connor-Smith (MOS), Tommy Pedersen (TP), Pamela Piombino (PP), Derek Pomeroy (DP), Bruno Portier (BP), Hugo Rainey (HR), Ahmed Riad (AR), Guy Rondeau (GR), Gourmet Birding Safaris (GBS), Valéry Schollaert (VS), Gavin Selfe (GS), Jean-Philippe Siblet (JPS), Adrian Skerrett (AS), Stephanie Tyler (ST), Mark Van Beirs/Birdquest (MVB), Adrian Verhagen (AV), Jill Warwick (JW), Simon Warwick (SW),Geoff Welch (GW), Hilary Welch (HW), and from* Africa—Birds & Birding, Birding World, Birdwatch and Dutch Birding.

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Preferred names

With the current instability over worldwide lists of bird names, authors are requested to follow those used in *Birds of Africa* Vols 1–6. For species not yet covered, please use appropriate regional handbooks and checklists eg Roberts for southern Africa, Zimmerman *et al* for East Africa and Dowsett & Forbes-Watson for all non-*Birds of Africa* species, eg from the Malagasy region. Deviation from such works should be noted and the reasons given. The Editorial Team will keep abreast of changes in nomenclature and when an agreed list of African names is available, will consider switching to follow it. Unless a sketch map is provided as part of the article, the names of places should, if possible, follow those on standard or readily available maps.

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Authors are requested to follow conventions used in The *Bulletin of the African Bird Club* and to refer to a recent issue for guidance. A detailed style guide can be obtained, either electronically or as a hard copy, on request from the Managing Editor.

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The ABC Representatives scheme aims to support existing members by providing a local point of contact in their region, for example, to answer queries to the Club, to solicit submissions for the bulletin, and possibly to arrange local meetings for members. Existing ABC members can contact their local Representative in the first instance with queries relating to the Club. ABC Representatives help to recruit new members in their region, for example, by distributing posters and arranging local advertising. In Africa, ABC Representatives help to identify opportunities to invest the ABC Conservation Fund and candidates for the Supported Membership scheme.

The Club aims to appoint many further ABC Representatives. If you are interested in supporting and promoting the Club in your region, have any queries, or require further information relating to the ABC Representatives scheme please do not hesitate to contact Paul Lascelles, the Country Representatives Coordinator, at the club address or email: reps@africanbirdclub.org.

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Although we have suggested a minimum of UK£25 to become a Supporting Member, any contribution is welcome. All members of the Club, even if they do not feel able to become Supporting Members themselves, are invited to nominate candidates for supported memberships. Candidates should be nationals of an African country, with a genuine interest in wild birds but without the resources to become members in their own right. Africans who think they may qualify are very welcome to put their own names forward, supported by a letter of recommendation from someone such as their employer, teacher or an officeholder in a local wildlife organisation.

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